

HB 4080 Testimony

Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Levy, Vice-Chair Gamba

We have an opportunity to advance an emerging technology in the form of small, low cost, portable, and safe solar energy systems, popularly known as Balcony Solar and Plug-In Solar. I'm a member of Third Act, which organized the Sun Day event in Corvallis in September. Balcony Solar was the topic of greatest interest among the majority of people we spoke to. This technology has a high level of popular support. Many states are considering bills similar to HB 4080. Benefits of widespread adoption of these systems include,

- reducing the load on the grid
- reducing consumers' electricity bills
- Increasing public participation in the transition to renewable energy

It is important to emphasize that HB 4080 considers the interests of the multiple stakeholders: protection for public safety, protection for electrical workers, protection for utilities.

Protection for public safety

Plug-In Solar products must be UL listed. The UL3700 standard for Plug-In Solar is under development. The Oregon Building Codes Division will incorporate into the Oregon Electrical Specialty Code any future changes specific to Plug-In Solar as part of the normal process of code updates. This process will take time and we shouldn't pre-judge the result.

Protection for electrical workers

Plug-In Solar systems must include an automatic shutdown in case of power outage. As stated previously, the products must be UL Listed. In addition, the installation must comply with all applicable codes and standards. I am a retired Electrical Engineer and in my work in Engineering & Construction and I know the importance of code compliance

Protection for utilities

Utilities will have immunity from liability related to the installation of these systems. Utilities will not need to manage interconnect agreements or net metering. Consumers must file a declaration such that utilities will be aware of the distributed generation attached to the grid.

Rooftop solar allowed Oregonians to participate in the adoption of renewable energy. Now we can expand the number of people who can participate through the availability of these small, low cost, portable and safe Plug-In Solar systems. From apartment dwellers in Portland who will be able to take their system with them when they move to families in small towns in Eastern Oregon who need to lower their electricity bills while also adding a measure of resilience by including battery storage. As this committee considers complex issues such as siting of generation facilities, new transmission lines, and grid capacity, passage of HB 4080 will allow Oregonians to quietly and efficiently add new sources of clean energy.