



Feb. 3, 2026

**TO:** Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

**FR:** Sharla Moffett, Senior Policy Director

**RE:** Support for HB 4102

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Good morning, Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Levy and Gamba and Members of the Committee:

I'm Sharla Moffett, senior policy director for Oregon Business & Industry. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. Chair Lively, Vice Chairs Levy and Gamba and Members of the Committee:

OBI is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, over 75% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

OBI is here in support of HB 4102, and we appreciate the work of the sponsors in bringing it forward.

Permitting is DEQ's core work and it is the primary way that Oregon's air, land and water are protected. Permitting is highly unpredictable as to the issues that arise and the length of time it takes. Without spending a lot of time on DEQ's broken permitting system, what we know is that the permitting process needs to be fixed.

HB 4102 does not fix chronic permitting issues at DEQ. However, it is an important tool permit applicants can use when rapid permit issuance is a priority. A business's ability to get a new facility permitted, make investments in existing operations, increase production or pursue a market opportunity is greatly hindered when a permit is delayed.

All permitting requirements still apply to the process, no steps are skipped, and permit issuance decisions are made entirely by DEQ. The bill simply provides some additional structure to authority that has existed for nearly 30 years and makes it more accessible to regulated entities. This authority has been vastly underutilized, and the bill will improve accessibility to this alternative process.

Assuming this bill does pass, it's important to note that we see third-party permitting as the exception rather than the rule. For one thing, third party permitting is very expensive, since a business must pay all applicable permitting fees to DEQ plus foot the bill for the third-party contractor. So, a permit applicant is essentially paying twice for a permit, but there is no revenue downside for DEQ. The point is that, although we hope that businesses can more easily access this process when permitting speed is essential, but we don't envision this permitting approach becoming the norm.

HB 4102 is an important tool that provides a workaround to the current permitting process, but it's not a panacea and it doesn't fix our broken permitting programs. However, *it is* a useful alternative applicants can utilize to expedite a time-sensitive permit.

OBI urges your support of HB 4102.

Contact: Sharla Moffett at [sharlamoffett@oregonbusinessindustry.com](mailto:sharlamoffett@oregonbusinessindustry.com)