



February 3, 2026

To: Representative John Lively, Chair, House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Representative Mark Gamba, Vice Chair, House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Representative Bobby Levy, Vice Chair, House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment

From: Katie Chamberlain, Regulatory Manager, Renewable Northwest

Re: Support for HB 4031

Chair Lively, Vice Chair Gamba, Vice Chair Levy, and Members of the Committee,

Renewable Northwest (“RNW”) is a regional clean energy advocacy nonprofit based in Oregon, dedicated to decarbonizing the electricity grid by accelerating the transition to clean energy resources. Our members include renewable energy and storage developers and businesses, environmental organizations, and consumer advocates. Thank you for the opportunity to offer our **support for HB 4031, which would temporarily allow large renewable energy projects to be permitted at the county level in light of expiring federal tax credits.**

Federal tax credits for wind and solar projects are rapidly expiring. To qualify, projects must “start construction” by early July of 2026 and must be energized within four years. That creates a very narrow window. If we fail to act, Oregon risks missing out on the opportunity to lock in lower cost power for decades to come.

Governor Kotek recognized this urgency and issued EO 25-25 directing agencies to expedite shovel-ready and tax credit qualifying renewable energy projects. However, without additional legislative action, some projects may still miss the federal deadline simply because of the time it typically takes to permit projects at EFSC. We will risk losing new in-state generation at the very

moment when electricity demand is growing rapidly, along with the quality jobs these projects create, and a roughly 30% discount on the power they produce.

HB 4031 offers a practical, temporary solution. It would allow large renewable energy projects to be permitted at the county level instead of requiring an EFSC site certificate. To qualify, projects would need to meet Treasury criteria for “start of construction” requirements by July 6, 2026, submit a county land use application by December 31, 2028, and demonstrate that they are on track to energize within 4 years. Counties already have significant experience permitting renewable energy projects in their jurisdictions, and nothing in this bill forces a county to take on a project - the bill merely provides optionality. Importantly, the bill maintains the integrity of the county permitting process and does not alter environmental or public participation standards.

RNW supports HB 4031 because it helps ensure that Oregon can bring needed generation online and at lower cost. It is a targeted, time-limited tool that preserves local control and existing standards while helping Oregon maintain reliability and affordability and make progress towards our clean energy targets.

Thank you.

Katie Chamberlain
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Renewable Northwest