OREGON
FIRE MARSHALS
ASSOCIATION

February 3, 2026

Oregon State Legislature
House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: House Bill 4080 Written Testimony (Opposition)

Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Fire Marshals Association (OFMA), thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony regarding House Bill 4080. OFMA represents fire marshals, fire code officials, and fire prevention professionals from jurisdictions across Oregon, including cities, counties, and fire districts. Our members administer and enforce the Oregon Fire Code and applicable fire and life safety provisions of the state building code, regulate hazardous materials, and lead community risk reduction efforts. OFMA's mission is to support consistent, technically sound fire and life safety standards that protect the public, emergency responders, and the built environment.

OFMA opposes House Bill 4080 as introduced. While we support renewable energy innovation and recognize the policy goal of expanding access to consumer-scale solar technologies, our opposition is grounded in firefighter safety, electrical fire risk, and concern with establishing technical building and electrical safety requirements through statute rather than through Oregon's established code development process.

House Bill 4080 authorizes the installation and use of portable solar photovoltaic energy devices designed to connect to a building's electrical system through a standard 120-volt outlet and receptacle, provided the device is listed and incorporates anti-islanding functionality. Listing and anti-islanding are important safety features; however, federal guidance acknowledges that photovoltaic systems can present hazards during firefighting,

including the risk of electrical shock from energized components, and emphasizes the importance of clear standards and consistent installation practices to mitigate those risks. These considerations are especially relevant during fire suppression and overhaul, when electrical system conditions must be predictable to ensure responder safety.

The bill allows a retail electricity consumer to install one or more devices with a combined generating capacity of up to 1,200 watts and expressly provides that such installation or use does not require electric utility review, approval, or an interconnection agreement. Although HB 4080 includes device-level safeguards, it does not establish a uniform, statewide mechanism to evaluate whether existing building wiring, receptacles, branch circuits, or electrical service capacity are appropriate for this application. This is of particular concern in older residential buildings and multifamily occupancies, where electrical systems may already be operating near capacity.

The bill does recognize electrical capacity as a limitation by allowing landlords, homeowners associations, and condominium associations to restrict installations where the electrical service or circuit cannot accommodate the device. However, this approach relies on private enforcement rather than consistent technical standards, inspection, and permitting through the building and electrical code system. Anti-islanding protections, while critical, do not replace the need for proper evaluation of installation methods, circuit loading, and building-specific conditions.

OFMA's primary concern is procedural. HB 4080 establishes broad statutory authorization for these devices while deferring critical safety details to future action by the Department of Consumer and Business Services to amend the state building code related to electrical capacity, mounting, and safe operation. Oregon's building and fire code development process exists specifically to evaluate emerging technologies through a transparent, consensus-based framework that includes fire service professionals, electrical experts, utilities, building officials, and other stakeholders. Advancing permissive use in statute before those technical standards are adopted reverses that process and increases the risk of unintended safety consequences.

If the Legislature wishes to advance this policy, OFMA respectfully recommends a code-first approach that conditions broad authorization on the adoption of clear technical standards through the established code process. Such an approach would allow appropriate evaluation of electrical capacity, installation methods, responder safety impacts, and enforceability before statewide implementation.

For these reasons, the Oregon Fire Marshals Association respectfully opposes House Bill 4080 as introduced and encourages the Legislature to address portable, plug-in solar photovoltaic energy devices through Oregon's established building, electrical, and fire code development process prior to enacting broad statutory authorization. This approach better supports firefighter safety, electrical system integrity, and consistent enforcement across jurisdictions.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Lora Ratcliff – OFMA President
On behalf of the OFMA Board of Directors and Membership