

Dear Senators:

I support the idea of having an accounting of the costs and benefits of the "green energy" programs that are being supported by Oregon taxpayers. I do have the following concerns and recommendations:

HB 2627:

1. The language of this bill can be interpreted to only require an accounting of the programs that are receiving benefits directly from public tax funds. There are also multiple regulations and requirements which increase the costs to citizens for purchase of products and services which need to be included. For example, energy efficient building requirements, equipment and product requirements such as for light bulbs, appliances, authorizing utilities to pass on the costs of renewable energy programs to consumers, etc.

This could be addressed by changing the language in Section 1 (1) (a) to read: "Identify, summarize and quantify all investments that the state has made through direct expenditures, tax incentives and programs adopted by the state to support clean energy, renewable energy and/or energy efficiency;" and (2)(a) to read: "The total costs associated with the program including increased costs to consumers."

2. According to Molly Sherlock of the Congressional Research Services, reports of jobs in the renewable energy industry tend to highlight jobs supported rather than jobs created. They also do not generally account for job losses in competing industries. I encourage you to clarify language in the bill to assure that the job creation numbers reflect actual jobs created as well as jobs lost as a result of the program.

3. The last concern I have is that often the amount of carbon saved is based upon the calculations used by the "Blue Sky" program. This calculation assumes that all energy saved or replaced by green energy is being produced by dirty coal generation methods. The calculated CO2 savings needs to be based upon the energy mix actually used in Oregon. There are additional problems with the calculations as they are based upon the e-grid and the developer of that system specifically states that the e-grid is not appropriate for use with intermittent energy sources such as wind or solar, but that issue would be difficult or impossible to deal with by the state agency completing the report.

Two additional items which would make the report more meaningful would be the addition under section (2) of the following two items: 1. Lost jobs, productivity or resources as a result of the program. 2. Increased costs to consumers as a result of the program or requirement.

HB 3091:

This bill also needs to include a stated intent that the calculations be based upon the actual energy mix and carbon footprint of the energy being used in Oregon in order for the information to be useful for future planning.

I am glad to see these bills coming through the legislature. I have become increasingly concerned about the cumulative impacts on the economy and the cost of living of Oregonians due to the prioritizing of multiple renewable energy bills going through the current legislature when combined with other bills previously passed. According to the U.S Department of Energy, prior to the start of the legislative session, Oregon provided more renewable energy grants, loans, incentives than any other state in the union including California. When so much of the resources of the state are being directed to renewable energy programs including downstream impacts, other needs are not being met. It is important that the citizens are receiving a greater return on that investment than would be realized if the resources were going to other priorities.

Please add these comments to the public record for HB 2627 and HB 3091.

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