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Senate Business and Transportation Committee Passes Controversial Energy Bill on Party-Line Vote

Salem, Ore. - Today, the Senate Committee on Business and Transportation passed a controversial bill overhauling Oregon's energy policy on a 3 to 2 partisan vote after adopting the -41 amendments. House Bill 4036-A doubles the renewable energy mandate by 2040, a target dependent on technology not available today. While carbon emissions reduction is a laudable goal, argued Senate Republicans, concerns over whether the plan would result in real carbon reduction and the high cost to Oregon ratepayers as utility companies purchase out-of-state renewables are too large to ignore.

"HB 4036 is the perfect example of Democrat leaders failing to fully evaluate a complex and potentially costly piece of legislation because they are determined to fast-track sweeping legislative changes through a 35-day session," said Senator Ted Ferrioli (R-John Day).

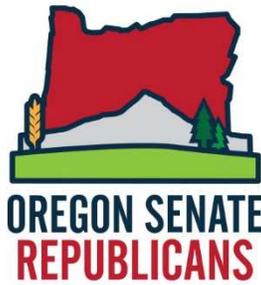
"Important stakeholders have been kept out of the policymaking process. The risks of this costly, controversial legislation are too high to rush this bill through the last two weeks of the legislative session."

Last week, Senate Republicans requested Committee Chair Lee Beyer (D-Springfield) invite Oregon Public Utility Commissioners to testify before the committee. The commissioners have expressed concern that HB 4036-A will not reduce carbon emissions but still pass on higher costs to ratepayers. Public Utility Commission Chair Susan Ackerman testified before the committee today, sharing concerns over anticipated negative consequences of the bill and

asserting there are more effective and less costly policies for both the environment and consumers.

HB 4036-A is slated to be considered by the full Senate later this week.

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