

Resolution of the Oregon Global Warming Commission

Resolution Number: 2008-4-003

Origin: Energy, Utilities, Stationary Source Committee

Recommendations from the Renewable Energy Working Group

Resolved, that the Oregon Global Warming Commission recommends that the Oregon legislature and the Governor adopt and implement the proposed program elements developed by the Renewable Energy Working Group (REWG), and adopted by the Governor in his climate change package, subject to the qualifications noted below. These program elements include:

Workforce Development – Develop a comprehensive program to create jobs in the clean energy industry and establish strategies that can be used to promote green job growth.

Research, Development and Demonstration – Provide assistance to help develop and improve renewable energy technologies in Oregon (see Qualification below).

Incentives – Provide the financial tools and structures to ensure that renewable energy projects will be developed in Oregon. This includes clarifications and expansions of existing tax credit programs, as well as new potential incentive programs. The Commission places particular emphasis on REWG recommendations to improve the transferability of the Business Energy Tax Credit.

Regulations – Expand the existing solar and wind net metering statute to include other renewable resources and technologies.

Qualifications:

Research, Development, and Demonstration. In support of meeting Oregon's greenhouse gas reduction and renewable energy goals, and to promote economic development in this key economic development cluster area, the Commission urges that the State – agencies and university system – coordinate closely with the private sector to identify targeted opportunities for creating, leveraging, or expanding renewable energy research, development, and demonstration efforts in Oregon. This will require Legislative support for key research initiatives in agency budgets, and in the higher education budget, while recognizing that constrained State revenues have put a premium on prioritizing initiatives. The Commission, in collaboration with the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute, will report to the Legislature in 2009 on progress in setting Oregon's research efforts within a strategic framework, with priorities and complementary funding strategies.

Work force development. Work force development and the creation of green jobs should be a key element considered by the 2009 Legislature.

Outcomes

In forwarding these recommendations, the Commission urges upon the Legislature the importance of maintaining and strengthening Oregon's momentum in renewable technologies and project development. Our state is well-positioned nationally to be one of the technology and manufacturing leaders, in significant part because public policies here are aligned with resource opportunities. The cooperative work of the 2007 Legislature and the Governor have been instrumental in this positioning, but leads evaporate if they are not continually supported and refreshed. The proposed legislative package, together with ongoing agency and university system support including workforce training and development – promise to deliver these. An increasingly critical limiting condition is the constrained electrical grid and inability to store, shape and deliver wind and other variable resources. The State must vigorously advocate with federal and private transmission system owners and operators the upgrading of grid capabilities to support the renewable resource targets of Oregon and other western States.

ADOPTED