



To: Members of the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
From: Rhett Lawrence, Pacific Northwest Policy Manager
Date: April 29, 2021
RE: Support for House Bill 2180

Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee:

My name is Rhett Lawrence and I am the Pacific Northwest Policy Manager for FORTH. We are a nonprofit trade association that advocates for the advancement of electric, hydrogen, shared, smart, connected, and autonomous mobility. FORTH has nearly 200 members, including auto manufacturers, electric vehicle charging suppliers, industry partners, utilities, local governments, and non-profit environmental organizations.

As you know, Oregon has ambitious greenhouse gas reduction goals and we are already behind in meeting them. And given that the transportation sector is now the biggest component of our state's greenhouse gas emissions, it is critical that we take steps to get those transportation emissions headed down — and quickly. Dramatically increasing the use of electric vehicles is one of the most significant steps we can take to reduce those transportation emissions.

FORTH has thus been very supportive of policy proposals which would speed up our state's transition to greater EV adoption, including making our homes and workplaces more conducive to EV charging. It is clear that if we are to have widespread adoption of EVs in Oregon, we will also need to greatly expand the availability of places to charge them. The lack of access to charging is one of the top barriers to EV adoption, and many Oregonians – particularly those who live in multifamily housing – simply do not have access to adequate charging facilities. Indeed, it's estimated that half of Americans don't have access to a dedicated off-street parking space where they can easily install an EV charger. Home is not the only place where it's important to have charging infrastructure; studies have shown that employees with access to workplace charging are 6 times more likely than the average worker to drive an EV.

House Bill 2180 will help us tackle the challenge of remedying that charging gap in Oregon. The bill requires that all new commercial development in the state and all new multifamily housing with five or more units have the conduit and provisions for electrical service capacity necessary to install EV chargers at 20% of parking spaces – this requirement is in line with charging infrastructure requirements passed elsewhere, such as the City of Atlanta and New York State. Notably, it does *not* require EV chargers to actually be installed at the time of construction. Instead, the bill will prepare parking areas for the future installation of EV chargers, allowing property owners to avoid the significant expense of retrofitting parking lots for such charging infrastructure.

Since new buildings are built to last for at least 50 years, it's critical that charging infrastructure is incorporated at the pre-construction stage to ensure that new buildings can accommodate the charging needs of future EV owners for decades to come. The installation of EV charging infrastructure is four to six times less expensive when included during the initial construction phase as opposed to a retrofit. One study that analyzed the cost implications of California's EV infrastructure building codes found that *each* EV-capable parking space installed in a multi-unit dwelling during new construction saves \$2,040 - \$4,635 over a retrofit scenario.

It is also important to note the necessity of making EV charging infrastructure available statewide, as HB 2180 will do. If EVs are going to be a truly viable alternative to gas-powered cars, it needs to be as easy to charge them in Burns as it is in Beaverton. If EV drivers cannot be assured that they can find readily available charging wherever they go in the state, they will be reluctant to make the shift to an EV as their primary vehicle. By making these requirements a part of the statewide building code, this bill will make EVs more accessible to all Oregonians and help EV owners feel comfortable that there will be a charging network for them wherever they go.

This legislation also dovetails nicely with work being led by ODOT on the Transportation Electrification Infrastructure Needs Analysis (TEINA) that was a directive from Governor Brown's Executive Order 20-04 from last year. That important inquiry is designed to assess the gaps in EV infrastructure in Oregon and propose policy solutions to address those needs. Forth is on the TEINA project team and is working to prepare that report for the Governor in June, so it'll be too late for consideration in this session. But, of course, we can expect that many of the policy solutions suggested in that report are likely to require substantial monetary investment from the state in order to close those gaps. HB 2180 will help to address Oregon's EV infrastructure needs without requiring any public investment.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to provide this testimony today and I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

FORTH Empowering Mobility
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