

STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY CARRIER:

House Committee on Energy, Environment and Water

REVENUE: No revenue impact**FISCAL: Fiscal statement issued**

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means
Vote:	8 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Bailey, Bentz, Boone, Krieger, Thompson, Witt, Cannon, Gilliam
Nays:	0
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Liz Puskar, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	3/15, 4/21

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Authorizes county government or its designee to conditionally approve siting on land zoned for exclusive farm use of solar energy generation facility that does not require site certificate where land has no appurtenant irrigation water right and contains soils predominantly in capability classes IV to VIII. Waives requirement for exception to statewide land use planning goal for any such siting. Requires applicant for such siting to demonstrate that solar generating facility can be operated in compliance with laws and regulations protecting fish and wildlife. Specifies under what circumstances Energy Facility Siting Council must determine jurisdiction of application to site solar energy generation facility. Revises statutes relating to regulation of energy facilities to include references to photovoltaic and other solar thermal technology.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Desire for solar generation facilities in Central Oregon
- Nature of land zoned for exclusive farm use in Central and Eastern Oregon
- Difficulties associated with obtaining zoning permit to build solar generation facility

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Authorizes county government or its designee to conditionally approve siting on land zoned for exclusive farm use of solar energy generation facility that does not require site certificate where land has no appurtenant irrigation water right and contains soils predominantly in capability classes IV to VIII. Waives requirement for exception to statewide land use planning goal for any such siting. Requires applicant for such siting to demonstrate that solar generating facility can be operated in compliance with laws and regulations protecting fish and wildlife. Specifies under what circumstances Energy Facility Siting Council must determine jurisdiction of application to site solar energy generation facility.

BACKGROUND: Solar power is the conversion of sunlight into electricity, either directly using photovoltaics, or indirectly using concentrated solar power. Concentrated solar power systems use lenses or mirrors and tracking systems to focus a large area of sunlight into a small beam. Photovoltaics convert light into electric current using the photoelectric effect. Oregon law requires many energy generation facilities to obtain a site certificate, which is an agreement between the State of Oregon and an applicant authorizing the construction or operation of the facility on an approved site. The Energy Facility Siting Council reviews applications for site certificates. House Bill 3595 A would allow county governments to use zoning statutes to approve, in certain circumstances, siting applications for solar energy generation facilities.

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This summary has not been adopted or officially endorsed by action of the committee.