



**Bureau of Planning and Sustainability**

Innovation. Collaboration. Practical Solutions.

March 20, 2013

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair  
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee:

The City of Portland strongly supports SB 562, which would enable community net metering in Oregon. This legislation is essential to ensuring equitable, lower-cost access to solar energy for many more Oregonians than are served by current net metering law. Net metering has proven to be a critical tool to support installation of solar energy in Oregon by homeowners and building owners. However, renters and building lessees are not able to make use of net metering.

The City of Portland has a long-standing commitment to supporting the development of a market for solar energy. The 2009 City of Portland/Multnomah County Climate Action Plan (CAP) calls for ten percent of the energy used in Multnomah County to be produced from on-site renewable sources by 2030. The Bureau of Planning and Sustainability (BPS) established a solar energy program in 2006 and, along with key partners, has helped dramatically increase the installed solar capacity in Portland since that time. Despite many gains, solar energy remains out of reach for many Portland residents, including renters, lower-income individuals and people who live neighborhoods with more shade than sun.

In recent years, community-shared solar has emerged as an innovative strategy to expand the use of renewable energy to underserved populations. The City of Portland attempted a community-shared solar pilot in 2012 under existing net-metering laws and with existing incentives available in the market (i.e., Oregon Volumetric Incentive Rate, federal Investment Tax Credit). That pilot faced many hurdles because of these constraints and did not ultimately result in solar installations, though a number of valuable lessons were learned. One of the key findings resulting from the City's pilot was that community net metering would offer a reasonable, pragmatic solution to the current legislative and regulatory obstacles to implementing community-shared solar projects.

SB 562 is a critical step toward removing barriers inherent in current net metering law and advancing community objectives around distributed energy, carbon emissions reduction and social equity.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Andria Jacob  
Senior Manager, Clean Energy Programs



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