



Eugene Water & Electric Board

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EWEB SUPPORTS SB 261 -- Promoting Affordable Electric System Reliability

I am Jason Heuser, Government Relations Liaison for the Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB), testifying in support of Senate Bill 261.

EWEB is Oregon's largest consumer-owned utility, serving 88,000 customers in the Eugene area. EWEB is not only a BPA power customer, we also own generation of our own throughout the Pacific Northwest and the health and affordability of BPA's transmission system is especially important to our customers and the rest of the region. BPA's system has served this region incredibly well the first 75 years, and now investments are needed for the next 75 years to function just as well.

EWEB and other BPA transmission customers strongly believe that creating an Oregon property tax liability for infrastructure built using BPA's Third Party Lease-Purchase agreements is a misinterpretation of this new financing tool BPA is using out of necessity due to a cap on their authority to borrow from the U.S. Treasury. It would be very unfortunate from our standpoint if this important tool in BPA's toolbox was weakened and that these increased costs were passed on to utility ratepayers without good reason.

SB 261 would undo this misinterpretation and put Oregon in harmony with the interpretation of other Western States, that infrastructure financed with Third Party Lease Financing is indeed federal property.

EWEB strongly urges you to vote yes on SB 261. Thank you for considering EWEB's views.

Jason Heuser
Government Relations Liaison
Eugene Water and Electric Board