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Sandy Husk, Superintendent

\ February 20, 2013

Ways and Means Subcommittee On Environment & Natural Resources

Greetings -

We appreciate the opportunity to contribute remarks re: Oregon Department of Energy's programs and services benefitting schools.

Background

For more than 30 years Oregon Department of Energy has been offering services and programs designed to increase energy efficiency in Oregon's K-12 schools. During this time, ODOE staff has worked closely with schools operations staff to build relationships, solve problems and save operational costs for schools.

ODOE programs have included oversight of energy audits for schools, refunds for efficiency projects implemented by schools, low-interest loans to fund projects, tax credit pass-through for qualifying project costs, circuit-rider training/workshops for school operators of boilers and HVAC controls, Resource Conservation Management support... and more. Many of those have changed and many have ceased but each has been effective in its time.

This ongoing, persistent, productive relationship has created a high level of trust between ODOE staff and schools facilities staff. ODOE has proven that they understand the multiple issues that dog school facilities – funding for operations, staffing and training, and the challenges of aging facilities. ODOE and schools collaborate to apply combined experience and program resources to resolve some of these issues.

Since 2002, the PPS program (we refer to as the “SB1149 program”) has provided tremendous benefits to the schools that qualify. From the beginning, ODOE staff has shouldered this program and moved it forward – to great effect. They have created a program environment that is welcoming, reliable, safe and easily accessible.

Suggested Future ODOE Services

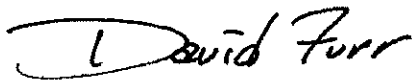
ODOE staff must continue to provide the services they currently provide for schools – and more.

- ODOE should be permitted and funded to add more staff and increase their services.

- ODOE services should include coordinating the use of PPS funds for Building Operator Certification training for school building operators. In our district, custodians are building operators and have scant training. This measure alone would effectively change the standard of operations in all districts, to statewide benefit.
- ODOE should be maintaining a pool of effective energy/performance management tools and programs and should document and reimburse (through PPS) expenses that yield persistent energy management savings.
- ODOE should again provide statewide on-site troubleshooting and training by contracted circuit riders to ensure operators are safe, knowledgeable and efficient.

Our schools are at the heart of our communities. They comprise millions of feet of building stock of all sorts. Our facilities are landmarks, our staff are long-tenured and our budgets are strained. Oregon Department of Energy has been an invaluable partner for Oregon schools for a long time.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Furr". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "D".

David Furr, CSBA
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