



Lake County Resources Initiative

A Healthy Economy and Environment based on Sustainable Natural Resources, ensuring Quality of Life for Present and Future Generations

February 16, 1015

Representative Jessica Vega Pederson
Chair, House Committee on Energy and Environment
900 Court St. NE, H-285
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Madam Chair and Fellow Committee Members,

I am writing in support of HB 2632. My organization has been working on renewable energy projects since 2004 as an economic development strategy for our rural area. While the 2008 recession was hard on every country, rural areas of Oregon have had the same economic downturn for over two decades. Lake County is 78% government owned land and that means 22% pays the taxes to support our local governments, roads and schools.

In 2005 with local elected officials and community leaders we designed an economic strategy around wind, hydro, solar, geothermal and biomass to become a net exporter of renewable energy. We also discovered that by implementing everything we had done feasibilities on we could offset all the fossil fuel emissions in Lake County.

Currently there are 7 MW of solar in operation in Lake County and 111 MW additional solar has been permitted. The first two systems were installed by local contractors bringing much needed work to the county. While solar does not create many full-time jobs it does bring new tax revenues to the county, municipalities and varies taxing districts. Information provided by the various solar companies wishing to build in Lake County estimate that 118 MW of solar would generate \$1,315,000 of new taxes, which is significant to a rural county like Lake. This helps law enforcement, hospital, roads, library, etc.

Passing HB 2632 will provide the incentive to install the 111 MW permitted and attract additional development. For a small investment Oregon will benefit from new taxes and a viable economic impact on climate change.

If it were not for a conflict and the distance I would have attended the hearing in person. I want to thank you for allowing me to opportunity to submit this written testimony.

Sincerely,

James K. Walls
Executive Director