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Date: March 26, 2015 at 3:52:34 AM PDT
To: <Beth.Reiley@state.or.us>
Subject: Comments SB477

Hello, I would like to submit comments to be entered into the record for the Senate Environment and Natural Resources Committee meeting yesterday 3/25:

Hello, my name is Garey Kurtz, I am from Portland. I would like the Committee to pass through SB477 as soon as possible this session. I attended the hearing on this bill yesterday. The urgency of the need to transition off of coal and onto clean renewable energy far out weighs the objections of the investor owned utilities that presented their views. The PGE representative said that they feel that there is not enough time to adequately evaluate this proposed legislation nor time allowed to adjust their electric generation capacity to comply. I attended the interim committee hearing last December 14th, this same representative said that PGE appreciated the ten year IRP process and would like to see regulatory authority stay with the Oregon PUC. We agree, their objections at this time seem inconsistent. On one hand they say there isn't enough time to evaluate and on the other that they are already certain that the requirements of this bill cannot be met in ten years. The amendments included in the dash one version allow greater flexibility in the implementation of this legislation. The PP representative's stated objections centered around a need for their company to realize full financial profitability from existing coal plants. In my opinion this company must have been fully aware of the harmful toxic emissions from these plants in the very least when they were built and that emission controls would eventually be required. The PUC spokesperson was clear that the cost of retrofitting the fleet of coal plants is very expensive and in my opinion is going the wrong direction. The objection that both representatives put forward is that the signals sent to other states will make negotiations for EPA 111d compliance more difficult and that electric rates could rise for rural ratepayers in Oregon.. Again the amendments to this bill allow for flexibility in the way this bill is implemented including options for how other states might determine their decisions about retiring coal plants or to keep them operational. There is also a provision to prevent rate shock to utility customers if that becomes an issue. In reality, this bill would create jobs in rural counties in Oregon. Currently there are no jobs here from out of state coal operations and no revenue to the State of Oregon either. In addition I would like to say that there are intelligent options available to control electric rates including a very exciting new development called an Energy Imbalance Market where improvements to our transmission grid would allow operators to shift from more expensive generation sources in the region to less expensive sources during off peak hours. An independent report states that we could save at least \$100 million per year in utility costs and we think that there are probably far greater savings if this technology is implemented. In addition, these improvements to the grid would probably put us much closer to allowing more renewable energy integration as well. BPA is currently leading a significant effort to evaluate and promote building and EIM here in the Pacific NW.

I heard one climate expert say that climate change is now occurring and that one of the most pressing concerns is for us to prepare for the consequences as much as we can. One very obvious and relevant concern is that low snow packs and overall lower precipitation could reduce hydropower output in this region going forward. Are we preparing for this possibility? Do we

just plan to burn more coal to make up the difference? We need to diversify our electric generation to avoid the risks associated with the climate changes that we know are a threat.

I believe that it is very critical to pass SB477 this session. We all know that transitioning off of coal and onto clean renewable energy is inevitable. The longer we wait to begin planning in earnest for this clear eventuality is another year that Oregon ratepayers are exposed to the costs and risks of investing in out of date and dangerous coal plants. When it comes to the uncertainty of meeting our obligations under 111d it seems to me that because the coal plants in question are located out of state there is very little relevance to this pending Federal regulation for Oregon. Please do not be deceived by the seemingly desperate attempts to delay the implementation of stronger legislation to protect Oregon ratepayers and our environment. Pass SB477. Thank you.

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