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Testimony is support of SB 477-3 on Behalf of Andy Maggi, Director of the the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club

There is widespread support from Oregonians to transition off of coal. The public recognizes that coal is outdated, risky for consumers, and a threat to the climate. Over 200 Oregonians visited the Capitol at the end of March to call on legislators to end out-of-state coal use and transition to more clean energy. Recent polling shows that 71% of voters support moving from coal to clean energy. By supporting SB 477-3 and unlocking Oregonians from having to pay for life-extending expenditures on aging coal plants, we can take an important step to protect ratepayers and our climate.

This legislation is critical right now. Last month, PacifiCorp released its 20-year energy plan, showing that without action in Salem, the company plans to keep Oregonians on coal for many more decades. Besides the Carbon coal plant in Utah, the few predicted coal plant retirements are all more than a decade away and none are yet subject to enforceable agreements. PacifiCorp actually concludes in its long-term energy plan that it could save ratepayers hundreds of millions of dollars by phasing out or converting some of its aging coal plant units rather than putting money into pollution controls. Yet the company keeps putting more money into coal.

There are at least a dozen coal units currently serving Oregon utility customers that are scheduled for pollution control upgrades over the next 10-15 years to comply with the federal Clean Air Act. One estimate from PacifiCorp says this equipment will cost \$4.2 billion through 2023. PacifiCorp states that they have already invested \$1.3 billion in projects from 2005-2011. Oregon ratepayers are on the hook for 25% of PacifiCorp's fleet-wide coal expenditures.

As a real-life example of concern to Oregon, the Environmental Protection Agency will decide on the level of control technologies necessary for PacifiCorp's Huntington coal plant in Utah, which contributes to regional haze pollution in five national parks. Should the agency require selective catalytic reduction (SCR) for Huntington, as it has done for other coal plants required to comply with haze pollution rules, the utility has estimated capital costs of over \$300 million.

This bill has real-world implications for opening up space for local clean energy development and climate protection through coal plant retirements. Both Washington and California passed similar strong EPS laws between 2006 and 2009. In California, the EPS has been instrumental in accelerating the retirement of outdated coal plants located in New Mexico and there are anticipated coal plant closures in Arizona and Utah.

Strengthening the current Emissions Performance Standard (EPS) through SB 477-3 will provide a clear signal to utilities that they cannot charge Oregon ratepayers for recovery of costs meant to extend the lives of outdated, polluting coal. The bill has the support of the Sierra Club and thousands of our members and activists. Legislators should act quickly to pass this important bill this session.

*Andy Maggi
Chapter Director
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