

Oregon State Association of Electrical Workers

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Chair Hoyle and Members of the House Rules Committee:

On behalf of the Oregon State Association of Electrical Workers (OSAEW), I am writing in opposition to HB 3470. The seven Oregon IBEW locals that make up the OSAEW employ over 9,000 members in Oregon who work in the electric utility industry and perform electrical installations, maintenance and service.

Our members all earn a living wage with generous health and pension benefits, which benefits our members, their families and the Oregon economy generally. We value each and every one of these jobs and believe careful policy considerations need to be made as we transition from coal to clean energy sources to protect these workers and their families. For this reason the OSAEW urges your opposition to HB 3470.

The OSAEW believes that we need to focus on clean energy technologies and policies that shift us away from coal, while giving special consideration and protection for workers in energy intensive industries. We support clean energy sources like wind and solar power and reducing emissions through energy efficiency measures; we believe there is a more appropriate way to transition away from coal without unduly impacting the jobs of our members.

We are also concerned that HB 3470 could impact Oregon's overall economy from increased electrical rates. Carbon emission standards need to be set at the national level and not state-by-state to ensure a level economic playing field for power producers and consumers. Federal regulation is the only way to effectively regulate power plants across state borders. We know new federal air quality regulations are expected to be released this summer and believe that Oregon should not act independent of these regulations.

Thank you for your considerations of our position on this issue. We urge the House Rules Committee to join us in opposing HB 3470.

Sincerely,



Robert Westerman, President
Oregon State Association of Electrical Workers