

PRELIMINARY STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

CARRIER:

Senate Committee on Business and Transportation

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, statement not yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued

SUBSEQUENT REFERRAL TO:

Action:

Vote:

Yeas:

Nays:

Exc.:

Prepared By: Patrick Brennan, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 2/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Directs the Public Utility Commission to establish a program for the procurement of electricity from community solar projects. Establishes guidelines for program implementation and qualifications for community solar projects. Requires the Commission to report on implementation of the program to interim legislative committees related to business and energy on or before January 1, 2019

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:

[-3 amendment] Adds “project manager” to definition of “owner” in section 1(1)(c). Modifies definition of “subscriber” to include those with an interest in part of a community solar project. Adds definition of “unsubscribed electricity”. Deletes specification that program must incentivize consumers that do not have the ability to install photovoltaic energy systems on their own property. Requires project manager in a power purchase agreement to be compensated. Deletes provisions related to making generating capacity available to low-income residential customers. Specifies that electricity procured by an electric company through a power purchase agreement in the measure may be used to comply with the renewable portfolio standard under ORS 469A.052.

BACKGROUND: Community renewable energy projects include those where community members pool their investments and benefits into renewable energy development. The term “community solar” refers to an arrangement where a solar-electric (photovoltaic) system is owned, in whole or in part, by community members who share either the energy itself or its monetary value on the market. A community solar model allows residents who do not own property amenable to photovoltaic infrastructure, such apartment owners or homeowners with shaded properties, to invest in such infrastructure.

Senate Bill 1572 directs the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to establish a program that creates incentives for residential and small commercial consumers of electricity, but who lack the ability to install photovoltaic systems on their own property, to be owners or subscribers in a community solar project. The measure also includes provisions for making electricity generated from such systems available to low-income residential consumers.