



Office of Mayor Charlie Hales
City of Portland

February 3, 2016

Senator Lee Beyer, Chair
Senate Committee on Business and Transportation
900 NE Court Street, HR B
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee:

The City of Portland strongly supports SB 1572, which directs the Oregon Public Utility Commission (OPUC) to establish a procurement program for community solar electricity and incentivize residential and small commercial consumer participation.

The City of Portland has had renewable energy policies in place since the 1970s. Portland's current Climate Action Plan, which calls for an 80 percent reduction in community-wide carbon emissions by 2050, establishes aggressive targets for installed solar capacity. Portland has made great strides in increasing solar adoption since 2006. There are now over fifteen megawatts of installed PV capacity within Multnomah County and we plan to double that number by 2020.

As Portland's solar programs have matured, we have sought to find ways to make solar more accessible to a wider range of Portland residents. The highly successful Solarize campaigns, which made going solar easy for hundreds of Portlanders, focused on homeowners in upper- and middle-income demographics. Applying an equity lens to City energy programs led Portland to pursue the development of community-shared solar electric systems.

Portland participated in OPUC docket UM 1746, which led to the Commission's adoption of a set of preferred attributes for community solar program design. The City of Portland supported the OPUC staff recommendations and urged creation of programs fostering a diversity of community solar projects, especially those that ensure the participation of low-income consumers.

By requiring the OPUC to determine a method wherein 15 percent of the total capacity of the new community solar projects from this program will be available for use by low-income residential customers, SB 1572 aligns with these stated priorities.

This legislation makes solar more accessible to Oregonians and will create local jobs by encouraging the expansion of utility-scale solar in rural Oregon and hopefully, smaller, distributed systems in the Willamette Valley. The diversity of renewable resource types and renewable energy developers is an important part of a healthy energy portfolio. Community solar is critical to advancing such a portfolio.

Thank you Senator Beyer, for your diligence and commitment to leading the development of this important renewable energy program for the people of Oregon. The City of Portland strongly supports SB 1572.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charlie Hales". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Charlie" and the last name "Hales" clearly distinguishable.

Charlie Hales, Mayor