

HB 3050 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources

Prepared By: Misty Freeman, LPRO Analyst

Meeting Dates: 4/4

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Allows the siting of commercial solar photovoltaic power generation facilities for the purposes of generating electricity for public use on lands designated Exclusive Farm Use; on land not determined to be high value farmland; or on high value farmland if governing body adopts exception to statewide land use planning goal relating to agricultural lands or determines no alternative site is available. Prescribes rules for demonstrating no alternative site is available. Directs Land Conservation and Development Commission to determine how land costs may be considered when evaluating siting of facilities that are not substantially similar.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

BACKGROUND:

Oregon's Statewide Planning Goals and Guidelines indicate the state's preference for restricting urbanization and preserving farmland through the implementation of strict zoning rules. Under current Oregon law, lands designated Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) have a set of activities and structures allowed on their premises. Common non-farm uses include "commercial activities in conjunction with farm use", "home occupations", and "utility facilities necessary for public service". High value farmland refers to lands composed predominantly of soils that are particularly well suited for growing agricultural crops.

House Bill 3050 would expand the set of activities and structures allowed on EFU lands to include solar power generation facilities generating electricity for public use. The bill would authorize siting of such facilities on high value farmland if the governing body adopts an exception to a statewide planning goal related to agricultural lands or if the governing body determines no alternative site is available.