



Lake County Resources Initiative

A Healthy Economy and Environment based on Sustainable Natural Resources, ensuring Quality of Life for Present and Future Generations

March 17, 2017

Senator Lee Beyer
Chair, Business and Transportation Committee
Oregon State Legislature
Senate Committee on Business & Transportation
900 Court Street NE, S-411
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for Senate Bill 979

Dear Chair Beyer and members of Senate Committee on Business and Transportation:

I am writing on behalf of Lake County Resources Initiative (LCRI) to express strong support for the "Renewable Direct Access" legislation proposed by the Northwest & Intermountain Power Producers Coalition (NIPPC). SB 979 permits nonresidential customers to leave their utility's cost of service power and buy green energy directly from the market.

LCRI has been involved with renewable energy since 2004. Today 14 MW of industrial solar is installed, another 85 MW solar planned; 2.5 MW of geothermal energy installed, another 30 MW planned; Lakeview School District and hospital installed geothermal heat in their facilities saving 800 tons of carbon/year and \$100,000/year each in energy costs. An independent economic analysis in 2011 showed that 22 homes, businesses and ranches who installed renewables in Lake County were saving \$125,200 annually or \$1.9 million over the life of the equipment. These 22 projects included ground source heat pumps, solar hot water, geothermal and solar electrical energy.

Renewable energy is good for business, economic development, environment and tax payers. In Lake County we are 78% government land, who pays little if any in lieu of taxes. The greatest job creators are biomass and geothermal but even solar brings in \$7,000/MW in new taxes.

In conclusion, allowing eligible customers to choose their power supply will permit competition to drive down prices and increase environmental benefits for everyone. For these reasons, I urge you to vote in support of SB 979.

Sincerely,

James K. Walls
Executive Director