

April 12, 2017

Dear Representative Brian Clem and members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

Comments regarding HB 2023 in response to ORECA's support for this bill:

1. Ted Chase of ORECA indicates they speak for their 10,000 members. I am one of those members. Mr. Chase does not represent me, and I am comfortable saying he does not represent the desires of thousands of their customers.
2. Umatilla Electric is currently involved in a Contested Case due to the fact that they do not believe that Wheatridge Wind Farm should have to include the transmission line connecting this development to the electric grid because Umatilla Electric is contracting to build the transmission line. Wheatridge has a rated capacity of 500 MW of renewable energy. Umatilla Electric has decided not to purchase any of this energy and yet they want the legislature to open up high value agricultural land for them to build additional renewable energy developments in the same county as this development.
3. Umatilla Electric has multiple options to meet their Renewable Energy requirement that will not become necessary for nearly a decade. They can build their developments on non-high value farm land, or they can purchase energy from one of the many existing and currently authorized renewable energy developments, including Wheatridge, which do not have customers to purchase their energy. Do not undermine Oregon's protections for high value farm land to serve the desires of this utility to avoid land use protections. They are already contracting to destroy enough high value farm land by using their power of eminent domain to build transmission lines for utilities they are not choosing to buy energy from.

Please do not send this bill out of committee. It is an example of a poor bill impacting thousands of acres of valuable farm land to benefit one company and in so doing, establishes a precedent that should not be set.

Sincerely,

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