



American Planning Association
Oregon Chapter

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Making Great Communities Happen

Tuesday, May 23, 2017

Representative Jennifer Williamson, Chair
House Committee on Rules
900 Court Street
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association testimony to the House Committee on Rules regarding HB 3456.

Dear Chair Williamson and members of the Committee,

The Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association (OAPA) is an independent, statewide, not-for-profit educational organization with 850 members that provides leadership in the development of vital communities by advocating excellence in community planning, promoting education and citizen empowerment, and providing the tools and support necessary to meet the challenges of growth and change.

OAPA has reviewed HB 3456 and the amendments proposed by Representative Barretto. Our organization typically does not support one-off bills that create special privileges for narrow special interests. This Bill, however, would allow a unique opportunity for electric power providers to develop solar power generation facilities within a specific area while not compromising the protection of high value farmland. In our understanding, the Bill could serve as a role model or pilot project for power providers to meet the state's ambitious Renewable Portfolio Standards (RPS). The Bill provisions encourage renewable energy, in this case solar, to be constructed in the area in which it will be consumed. This has both economic benefits to ratepayers as well as the positive land use benefit of minimizing impacts to farmland by reducing the need for extensive transmission lines.

Given the RPS we expect to see more changes to Oregon's Statewide Planning Program in the future. This Bill establishes an expectation that development of renewable energy should be balanced with protection of farm land. Thank you again for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Damian Syrnyk', written in a cursive style.

Damian Syrnyk, AICP, Chair, Legislative and Policy Affairs Committee
Oregon Chapter of the American Planning Association