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To: Members of the House Rules Committee
From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club
Date: June 26, 2017
RE: House Bill 2020

Chair Williamson and Members of the Committee: On behalf of the more than 20,000 members and supporters of the Sierra Club in Oregon, I am pleased to provide this written testimony in support of House Bill 2020.

As an organization with a long history working to address the impacts of climate change in Oregon, we believe that HB 2020 is also worthy of your support. As you know, this legislation would restructure the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) and merge it with the Oregon Global Warming Commission (OGWC). Clearly, given the very real – and already occurring – threats of climate change to Oregon, we need leadership and direction from the state. ODOE and the OGWC have been critical to those efforts thus far and we strongly support ways to improve and synergize their abilities to provide that leadership moving forward.

We are pleased that this legislation would bring an explicit climate change lens to the work of ODOE. This is a step in the right direction and we believe it is the appropriate direction for the department to be heading. In addition, the current work of the OGWC is critical to our state's future and we would like to see that that important work continues. An amendment to the bill explicitly acknowledging that the new agency will inherit and continue all of the duties of the OGWC would thus be welcomed. However, even without such amendment, we believe that this legislation is important enough to move forward regardless.

For all of these reasons, the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club supports House Bill 2020. We believe its important aims to bring a climate change focus to ODOE and to incorporate into the department the vital work of OGWC will be beneficial to our state and to the climate. Thank you very much for considering our comments and please do not hesitate to contact me if I may be of further assistance to the Committee.