

Rep. Ken Helm, Chair
House Energy and Environment Committee
900 Court St. NE, H-490
Salem, Oregon 97301
Email: rep.kenhelm@oregonlegislature.gov

Dear Representative Chair Helm:

Cypress Creek Renewables (CCR) is a proponent of HB 2857. Renewable energy development in Oregon encounters hurdles from several angles. HB 2857 will assist in removing roadblocks that are detrimental to responsible and responsive renewable energy development in Oregon. Renewable energy developers are working to bring projects online in Oregon. Mature renewable energy proposals generate benefits to economic development like local jobs, locally generated energy, and increased tax income for counties.

In Oregon, CCR develops small scale solar projects that interconnect to the distribution level grid near human communities. The renewable power is generated locally and sent onto the grid to be utilized within the region. Currently projects pay for the upgrades to the system to interconnect the project and this is a significant hurdle for small projects to bear. The bill as written would align Oregon's PURPA with Federal Energy Regulatory Commission polices that ensure that transmission upgrade costs are shared by all the ratepayers that benefit from the upgrades to the system. This benefit would allow some projects to come online that currently do not pencil due to upgrade hurdles and projects may be able to explore siting in areas that currently are not feasible.

HB 2857 as written is good policy! The bill will strength the PUC to uphold PURPA as intended and provide guidance for parties to seek timely resolution within the court systems as warranted. The guarantee that 8% of the electricity sold within Oregon is generated by small-scale renewable power projects promotes a diversified energy mix. Creative regional projects may benefit from the ability to seek a pathway to completion with the implementation of HB 2857 as it promotes small renewable energy development.

Proposed projects will benefit from fair energy prices that account for the cost the utility avoids by not needing to build expensive transmission lines to send energy from large single source facilities. The PUC will be able to represent Oregon with strengthened goals to promote small scale renewable development. A longer public notice period for rate changes will ensure a robust public process. The low energy prices as well as the cap on project size of 3MW in some territories has slowed solar development in Oregon dramatically. Standard prices for projects up to 10MW would allow for the continued renewable energy development in Oregon and we encourage the House Committee of Energy and Environment to move this bill forward in the process. Thank you for your time and dedicated work on HB 2857.

Sincerely,

Amy Berg Pickett