



## Providing Natural Resource Leadership

March 27, 2019

Representative Ken Helm  
House Committee on Energy and Environment  
Oregon State Legislature

Re: HB 2322

Dear Chair Helm and House Committee on Energy and Environment Members,

The Yamhill Soil and Water Conservation District (district) is providing this written testimony to communicate its concern of language and potential impacts of HB 2322. Our district assists and work with landowners, land managers and other constituents in Yamhill County to protect important farmland and high value soils, wildlife habitat and other natural resources.

Our district believes the current statewide goals and energy policies are adequate to promote and advance renewable energy initiatives in the state. The current administrative rules allowing siting of solar facilities on agricultural lands in Oregon was recently reviewed by the Oregon Department of Land Conservation and Development. Many concerns were raised during the review process about appropriate siting, cumulative impacts on agricultural lands, and loss of high value soils in some of Oregon's most productive agricultural areas. We believe modifying statewide land use planning goals could create an avenue for prioritizing renewable energy over protecting farmland and other Statewide goals.

Our district, concerned citizens, and other groups have stated the importance of protecting agricultural lands and the industries that rely on these lands. Agriculture is soil dependent, while solar and other renewable energy facilities have alternatives for siting in other locations.

The district supports renewable energy projects in the right locations. However, altering Oregon's land use goals with HB 2322 could create unintended consequences and provide a future avenue to allow more development of energy facilities on agricultural lands, not currently permitted under current law and administrative rules.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2322.

Barbara Boyer

District Chair