

April 1, 2019

Representative Helm, Chair, House Committee on Energy & Environment  
Members, House Committee on Energy & Environment

Re: Support for HB 2322

Dear Chair Helm:

Cypress Creek Renewables develops, constructs, owns & operates small utility scale solar farms in Oregon. This development has brought locally generated renewable energy, increased tax income for counties, and well paying construction jobs.

CCR supports HB 2322 and the objective of finding consistency between Oregon's energy goals and policies and Oregon's land use goals and policies.

The Oregon Legislature has established Oregon as a leader among states in renewable energy objective by adopting into law such forward-thinking and innovative policies as the 50% Renewable Portfolio Standard, the Coal Transition Act, and Community Solar. However, Oregon's land use system has declined to consider these laws, and has become a choke point for increasing the use of renewable energy in Oregon.

The Department of Land Conservation and Development ("DLCD") has taken the position that Statewide Planning Goal 13, the overarching goal that addresses energy in land use, has no connection to renewable energy generation and need not be applied consistently with Oregon's established energy policies. This agency's position was upheld by the Oregon courts.

CCR also recently participated in the solar rulemaking convened by DLCD. This process made clear that the agency does not consider renewable energy generation as part of the land use system. The rulemaking process addressed the land use goals for resource lands without considering or balancing Oregon's established energy policy. The result was a ban on solar project on Class 1, 2, prime, and unique farmlands, effectively prohibiting solar development in proximity to the largest areas of energy demand in the state.

HB 2322 starts the process to ensure that energy issues are actually considered in the land use process. To date, that has not been the case. No priority over other land use goals is proposed, just that energy be identified as a land use goal worth consideration by DLCD. This is a critical first step in ensuring that Oregon can meet its current and future energy policy objectives and remain a leader in its efforts to address climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the use of energy by all Oregon communities.

Amy Berg-Pickett