

April 2, 2019

Via Email

House Committee on Energy and Environment  
Chair Ken Helm  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

**RE: SUPPORT HB 2322 AND**

Dear Representative Helm:

Ecoplexus is a San Francisco-based renewable energy developer that, in 2017, decided to place a strategic bet on Oregon as one of the Company's primary focal points for its development efforts over the next decade. As a multi-state developer, owner, and operator of renewable energy facilities, Ecoplexus has a unique perspective on both the promise and pitfalls of Oregon's renewable energy landscape.

On paper, Oregon has the potential to be nothing short of a renewable energy powerhouse: an aggressive renewable portfolio standard coupled with strong wind, solar, and geothermal resources set against the backdrop of a region facing significant retirements of coal-fired electrical generation capacity means that the state should be well-positioned to ascend in the rankings of installed renewable capacity nationwide. In reality, however, Oregon is plagued by a variety of factors that threaten to delay or even outright prevent this vision from coming to fruition.

One of these factors is in the area of land use. Oregon's land use planning goals have been dramatically successful at protecting the state's natural resources from the effects of sprawl and unrestrained suburban development. Fewer places have a richer network of cities, towns, farms, forests, and high-desert vistas. However, the time has come for the goal system to evolve to reflect the growing and inevitable presence of renewable energy on the landscape.

HB 2322 is the vehicle that will help bring Oregon's land use system in line with the new renewable energy reality. It is designed to specifically ensure that the goal system reflects the state's energy policies. Goal 13, the state's energy goal, has not been updated since 1974: a time when utility-scale renewables were a mere figment of the imagination. The fact that renewable energy has yet to be codified into Oregon's goal system – and that the renewable energy policies of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are operating within a land use system from the 1970s – means that solar and wind development is often



needlessly at odds with land use policy. The net effect of this conflict is that new renewable energy facilities take significantly longer and are far more costly to develop, if they are developed in Oregon at all. The integrated nature of the Pacific Northwest transmission system means that a developer can choose to site a project in Washington, which generally features a more favorable permitting climate for renewables, depriving Oregon residents of badly needed economic development and tax revenue. But HB 2322 can reconcile this conflict by balancing the state's strong land use goals with its aggressive renewable energy policies.

Ecoplexus encourages the Committee to support HB 2322 and help ensure that Oregon continues to protect its abundance of natural resources while taking its rightful place among the ranks of the nation's leaders in renewable energy development.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N. Rogers", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Nathan Rogers  
Director of Project Development – Western Region

