

April 5, 2019

Representative Ken Helm, Chair  
Committee on Energy and Environment  
Oregon House of Representatives  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Helm and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide contextual information regarding House Bill 2494 and how its passage could affect Energy Trust of Oregon. Pursuant to our grant agreement with the Public Utility Commission (PUC), Energy Trust does not advocate or take positions on legislative initiatives.

For the record, Energy Trust is an independent non-profit and its mission is to help the ratepayers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista acquire cost-effective energy efficiency and generate small-scale renewable energy. Energy Trust is funded by the ratepayers of the aforementioned utilities with public purpose charges authorized by SB 1149 and SB 838, as well as by agreements between natural gas utilities and the PUC.

### **Achievements**

Since 2002, through its programs, Energy Trust has helped Portland General Electric and Pacific Power customers save and generate 796 average megawatts of electricity, enough to power 678,000 homes. We also have helped natural gas customers conserve 58 million annual therms of natural gas. Over time, Energy Trust investments made to date will save customers \$7.6 billion on their utility bills. These investments have already offset the equivalent of 22.8 million tons of CO<sub>2</sub>.

### **Accountability**

Energy Trust reports quarterly and annually its expenditures and achievements to the PUC, which in turn submits a report to the Legislature every biennium. Additionally, Energy Trust annually contracts for a third-party financial audit, the [most recent of which](#) was conducted by the accounting firm Moss Adams. For 2018, Energy Trust again received an unqualified audit.

Pursuant to SB 1149, Energy Trust also undergoes a management audit every five years. Additionally, in 2018 the Oregon Secretary of State conducted an audit of Energy Trust's management and expenditures to "determine whether Energy Trust administrative costs are reasonable and whether PUC has reasonable controls in place to oversee these costs." The Secretary of State's

[audit report](#) “determined Energy Trust’s administrative costs are generally reasonable” and made three recommendations for oversight enhancements which the PUC and Energy Trust have largely adopted (see PUC Chair Decker’s letter addendum on page 25).

### **Strategic Planning**

Since May 2018, Energy Trust’s volunteer Board of Directors has been working to develop its 2020-2024 Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan will identify long-term opportunities and challenges facing the organization and direct Energy Trust staff as they update and design programs to deliver benefits to utility customers. The 2020-2024 Strategic Plan is scheduled to be finalized in July 2019. All board meetings and Strategic Planning workshops are open to the public, and materials and minutes are available on [our website](#).

Energy Trust, our customers and over 2300 Trade Allies rely upon the Strategic Plan for guidance as they consider their own business plans and investments, and in many cases, those plans and investments require significant lead times. For instance, Energy Trust currently funds early project development studies for farmers and ranchers considering implementing upgrades to antiquated and inefficient irrigation systems. When upgrades are carried out, energy-hungry pumps are retired, and in many cases, small-scale hydroelectric generation can be installed. Energy Trust’s Renewable Energy Program support for these customer projects relies upon Public Purpose Charge funding and is key to their success. As you can see from page 5 of the attachment—*The Case for Collaboration*—by Farmers Conservation Alliance (FCA), many of the current Irrigation Modernization program projects have multi-year project plans. It should be noted that the irrigation districts listed represent less than half of the potential irrigation improvement projects identified by FCA.

I hope this information is useful to you and your colleagues in your deliberations. Please contact me if you require additional information regarding Energy Trust of Oregon achievements, program activities or benefits delivered to Oregon ratepayers.

Sincerely,

**Jay Ward**

*Sr. Community Relations Manager*

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