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Environmental
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**Testimony to the Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources
On Senate Bill 5545**

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Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council strongly supports SB 5545.

OEC's climate program director had the pleasure of serving on the Energy Advisory Working Group for the Oregon Department of Energy. During that time our organization was able to take an in-depth look at the agency's responsibilities and budget. It was also an opportunity to have thoughtful conversations with other Working Group members, who despite not always agreeing on every policy point, all agree that energy is critical to Oregon and the state needs strong agency capacity.

ODOE plays an important role in the energy safety and security of our state—continuing to monitor the Hanford nuclear site and coordinating energy emergency preparedness.

Equally as important, ODOE's mission has been to pursue a sustainable energy future. Climate change is one of the greatest threats our state faces. Many of our energy resources, such as coal, oil, and natural gas, emit greenhouse gases that are destabilizing the climate. Other critical energy resources, such as hydropower, are susceptible to climate impacts--drought years reduce hydropower and make the state less energy secure. It is important that state agencies understand the interplay of impacts and move the state towards a more sustainable resource mix.

ODOE has played, and needs to continue to play, an important role in analyzing, guiding, and supporting the development and utilization of energy efficiency and renewable energy. The first edition of ODOE's newly refocused Biennial Energy Report was a phenomenal feat and is an extremely valuable tool for the state. It pulled together data and trends that provide important context for energy and climate decision-making. In particular, we strongly support and value the Planning & Innovation division.

ODOE's current responsibilities and mission are essential for taking Oregon into the next decade of energy and climate policy.

We strongly support and respectfully urge a yes vote on SB 5545.