



June 10, 2019

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Co-Chairs Senator Kathleen Taylor and Representative Jeff Reardon
RE: Oregon Department of Energy 2019-2021 Budget

Sustainable Northwest is writing to express our full support for the Oregon Department of Energy. It is the state's primary agency working on behalf of all Oregonians to ensure a clean and resilient energy future. As an organization that works with rural stakeholders, Sustainable Northwest sees the Department as critical to providing technical assistance and financial incentives to rural and underserved farmers, ranchers, tribal communities, and businesses.

Oregon Department of Energy provides a vital service to all Oregonians, regardless of region or servicing utility. While urban centers enjoy programs and services from the Energy Trust of Oregon, the Department delivers critical programs and technical support to rural and underserved communities. These communities are likely to face greater impacts from climate change and natural disasters, and are often last to receive relief and returned services. For instance, **The Department's new *Guidebook to Improve Local Energy Resilience* demonstrates the significant and distinct value of this agency.** The Guidebook focuses exclusively on Consumer Owned Utility territory, building statewide partnerships and planning services to ensure all Oregonians have the opportunity to rebound from a natural disaster.

In addition to resilience planning, Oregonians rely on the Oregon Department of Energy for statewide technical analysis, energy resource forecasts and trends, siting, and energy development incentives. **The Residential Energy Tax Credit and Renewable Energy Development Grant ensured that customers outside of Investor Owned Utility territory could develop clean energy resources.** These are regions that enjoy abundant renewable resources such as solar, wind, biomass, and geothermal. **Without these programs, rural energy customers will continue to be disproportionately impacted, despite resource availability.**

Sustainable Northwest looks forward to continuing to serve on the Department's Energy Advisory Workgroup, ensuring the agency fulfills its mission to advance a resilient energy future. A strong State Department of Energy with programs to move a clean energy, low carbon economy forward is in the interest of all Oregonians. We encourage the legislature to advocate for funding stability and resources to achieve these noteworthy objectives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "G. Block", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Greg Block
President