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

Dear Chair Power, Vice Chairs Bonham, Sollman and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to offer contextual information regarding Energy Trust of Oregon, the ways in which we serve energy-burdened Oregonians and how our programs could be affected by House Bill 4067.

For the record, Energy Trust is an independent non-profit organization 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 stipulations between natural gas utilities and the Oregon Public Utilities Commission (OPUC). Pursuant to our grant agreement with the Commission, Energy Trust does not advocate or take positions on legislative initiatives.

Energy Trust has a long history of providing efficiency and renewable energy services to Oregon utility customers. From our inception in 2002 through 2018, our work has helped participants save and generate 853 average megawatts of electricity and 65 million therms of natural gas. \*

Energy Trust programs serve qualifying businesses, schools, hospitals, farms, ranches and other commercial and industrial customers and, of course, homeowners and renters—the latter includes homeowners and renters with low and moderate incomes, many of whom are likely to be energy-burdened. By reducing their energy use and associated utility bills, participants free up scarce financial resources for other important family living expenses such as food, medicine and transportation. To date, those energy savings have resulted in more than \$3.2 billion in customer bill savings.

Tasked with delivering cost-effective energy efficiency measures, it has been Energy Trust's experience that low- and moderate-income Oregonians are often more challenging for us to serve. This assessment is informed by internal analysis and by our experience participating in low-income working groups convened by Governor Brown and during the public process the OPUC convened pursuant to SB 978.

*\*One megawatt is 1 million watts. One million watts delivered continuously 24 hours a day for a year (8,760 hours) is an average megawatt.*

The learnings gleaned from those experiences informed our recently adopted strategic plan, which has as one of its priorities, directing more attention to underserved customers, which includes customers with low incomes, communities of color and rural customers.

While Oregon Housing and Community Services Department and Community Action Programs are primarily focused on low income customer segments, Energy Trust realizes that we must be more intentional helping those customers save energy and, where appropriate, generate their own renewable energy. Doing so will support our mission of acquiring all cost-effective energy efficiency and supporting small-scale renewable energy for all customers of our funding utilities.

To that end, we recently partnered with Community Energy Project to provide income-qualified customers increased incentives for highly efficient heat pump hot water heaters and smart thermostats. Additionally, in December we began offering early solar project development assistance for Community Solar projects (authorized in SB 1547) which benefit low-income Oregonians. We also increased *Solar Within Reach* incentives to help customers overcome first-cost barriers and increase the number of solar systems installed in low-income communities. Energy Trust believes that these offerings will increase the energy saving benefits we deliver to underserved customers, but we are under no illusion that they will, by themselves, meet all needs of energy-burdened Oregonians.

Specific to HB 4067, Section 4 (a) directs the OPUC to:

**(a) Investigate the potential for demand response, weatherization and other programs to reduce energy burdens and energy bills;**

As Energy Trust delivers its programs pursuant to a contract with the OPUC, this provision would seem to offer the possibility of expanding our offerings to energy-burdened utility customers, if the Commission so directs us.

Should the legislature choose to pass HB 4067, Energy Trust stands ready to participate in the public processes contained in the legislation and to work with the Commission to identify, support and deliver enhanced energy efficiency and renewable energy programs to energy-burdened utility customers.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer Energy Trust's perspective on HB 4067. Please feel free to write or call with additional questions or information needs.

Sincerely,

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