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Testimony House Energy and Natural Resources  
12/8 2022

Oregon Siting Workgroup  
Local Siting Process

Good Morning Vice-Chairs Hudson and Brock-Smith, and Members  
of the Committee:

My name is Mike McArthur, the Executive Director of the Community  
Renewable Energy Association know as CREA.

> CREA is an Oregon Public entity organized under ORS chapter 190,  
representing local government and with renewable energy developers  
as ex-officio members. CREA's members include most of the  
counties where renewable projects are being developed.

> HB 2021 will require significant build out of renewable generation.  
CREA wants to see it happen in Oregon. Some developers say  
Oregon is hardest state in region to site projects.

> The BPA interconnection queue indicates requests to connect to  
the grid for more than 46,000 MW from just 4 counties in North  
Central Oregon.

> For instance 15,000+ MW are proposed in Sherman County alone.  
If only 10% of those projects go forward it would more than double  
generation from Sherman, which already leads the state in generating  
capacity.

- > The rural counties where renewable energy development is happening typically have small planning staffs (like 1 person @ Sherman).
- > Even so, projects that are able to use the local siting process get sited sooner and less expensively but there are limits on the size of projects eligible for the county process. The most is 1920 acres for solar which equates to 40-50 MW.
- > Renewable energy is not currently explicitly recognized as a land use value under the goals, which conflicts with state law - HB 2021 and Governor's Climate Executive Order 20-04. That means that other land use values are given more weight in the permitting process, which is contributing to siting difficulties
- > The Oregon Land Use system needs to be updated to account for renewable energy.
- > We need to find ways to expedite siting and reduce conflicts that development inevitably creates. We need not create further obstacles and processes that delay the development of renewable generation if we are to reach our goals.
- > That's why CREA is participating in this workgroup.
- > We thank Oriana for her leadership and facilitation of this process and appreciate the time to speak with you today.
- > CREA is happy to provide more information as requested anytime. Don't hesitate to reach out with any questions.