



March 8, 2021

To: Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Owens, Vice Chair Reardon, and Members of the House Committee on Water

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 3221, the Oregon Renewable Options Program

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Owens, Vice Chair Reardon, and Members of the Committee:

Central Oregon Irrigation District (COID) respectfully submits this letter in support of HB 3221.

COID was founded in 1918. We provide water to 45,000 acres of land and 4,000 residential and agricultural customers in Bend, Redmond and surrounding areas. We operate a system of 700 miles of open canals, laterals, pipelines, etc. that was built in 1907. Our farmers produce grass hay, alfalfa hay and livestock, supporting an extensive network of agriculturally-related jobs in our area.

COID is actively pursuing the modernization our water delivery system to increase the reliability of our agricultural water supplies, supporting long-term jobs in our area, with the potential to provide additional benefits to Oregon's fish and wildlife. The Deschutes River will benefit from our conservation projects. As part of this modernization process, our district is exploring the potential to install solar and generate conduit hydropower. Both of these renewable energy technologies could help our district's modernization efforts by reducing energy costs, and therefore long-term operating expenses, and by providing us a new source of revenue to help pay for our water system's much needed upgrades.

HB 3221 would give our district the ability to negotiate with Pacific Power to purchase the output of our potential power plants, at rates that would put a value on the local and environmental benefits that they could make possible in our community. Our farmers would be proud to produce renewable energy that could serve Oregon with local power, while helping to further the modernization of our aging water infrastructure.

COID respectfully asks for your consideration and support for HB 3221.

Sincerely,

Craig Horrell  
Managing Director