



March 31, 2021

Representative Pam Marsh, Chair
House Committee on Energy and Environment

RE: HB 3375 – SUPPORT

Chair Marsh and Committee Members:

Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization that advances innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon’s environmental challenges for today and future generations. Climate Solutions is a regional non-profit working to accelerate clean energy solutions to the climate crisis. **On behalf of our thousands of members statewide, we urge you to support HB 3375-1.**

As discussed at length in the bill findings, wind development off Oregon’s coasts provides important opportunities for diversified economic development, increased energy security, and improved energy resilience of Oregon’s coastal communities. The bill also rightly recognizes that “floating offshore wind energy can contribute to a diverse, secure, reliable and affordable renewable energy resource portfolio to serve the electricity needs of Oregon ratepayers and improve air quality, particularly in disadvantaged communities.”

Oregon is particularly well poised to not simply accommodate, but to lead in floating offshore wind energy development-- and thereby attract investment capital and advance community economic growth and long-term job creation, as highlighted in a 2016 Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM) study.¹ That’s because Oregon’s offshore wind resources hold significant energy potential and can be responsibly harnessed to deliver clean, reliable electricity to not just Oregon’s coastal communities, but statewide, as well as to California and Washington. Significantly, a 2020 Pacific Northwest National Laboratory study found that up to three gigawatts of electricity--enough to power up to 1 million homes--from winds off the coast of Oregon could be carried through today’s grid by current transmission lines.²

Recognizing the immense potential of renewable energy development off Oregon’s coasts, HB 3375-1 would study the impacts, benefits, opportunities and barriers of floating offshore wind energy in Oregon and define pathways to take advantage of federal offshore wind investment tax credit and other federal infrastructure investment programs that could benefit Oregon’s ports and transmission system. We are pleased that HB 3375-1 specifies that the planning should aim to maximize benefits to the state while minimizing conflicts between floating offshore wind energy, the ocean ecosystem and ocean users.

¹ Bureau of Ocean Energy Management (BOEM), “Floating Offshore Wind in Oregon: Potential for Jobs and Economic Impacts from Two Future Scenarios.” <https://www.boem.gov/sites/default/files/environmental-stewardship/Environmental-Studies/Pacific-Region/Studies/BOEM-2016-030.pdf>

² Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, “Exploring the Grid Value Potential of Offshore Wind Energy in Oregon” https://www.pnnl.gov/main/publications/external/technical_reports/PNNL-29935.pdf.

For these reasons and other reasons, we urge your support HB 3375-1.

Sincerely,

Nora Apter
Climate Program Director
Oregon Environmental Council

Meredith Connolly
Oregon Director
Climate Solutions