

House Energy & Environment Committee
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

RE: House Bill 3375

Dear Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Brock Smith, Vice-Chair Helm, and members of the committee,

I am retired, live in Portland and organize with the Metro Climate Action Team (sponsored by OLCV), which is a community of volunteers working to ensure Oregon is a leader in addressing the climate crisis. I also work with another community of volunteers (OCEAN) focused on the responsible development of offshore wind energy on Oregon's south coast.

HB-3375 is a planning bill and an early step toward the responsible development of Oregon's abundant offshore wind resource. It can add certainty to our state's clean energy trajectory and market. This increased certainty drives investment from the federal and private sectors, as well as competition from the development community, signals energy planning agencies and organizations for incorporation of planned development, and provides a timeline for Oregonians to ramp up labor and supply chain capacity for maximum economic benefit.

To address the climate crisis, we will need to electrify more of our transportation, building heating, manufacturing and other activities. Yet, today nearly half of Oregon's electricity is still generated by fossil fuels, much of it imported from other states. In order to meet our state's climate goals we will need to develop substantial amounts of renewable energy. Offshore wind can provide that needed capacity and revitalize the coastal economy with family wage jobs and put the region on a sustainable path to the future. Ultimately, it could change Oregon from an importer of polluting energy to an exporter of clean energy.

Offshore wind energy will enable significant progress mitigating the climate crisis. Oregon is home to one of the best offshore wind areas in the world for generating electricity. Developing this natural resource has the potential to reduce green house gas emissions more than any other action the state can take. Each gigawatt of generating capacity from offshore wind farms can displace the equivalent of 2 average coal-fired plants like Boardman and provide clean energy to the grid. It can also relieve some of Oregon's existing transmission import congestion to accommodate more renewables to be built in other regions of the state.

Offshore wind energy can bring transformative economic development to coastal regions hit hardest by climate change. "Build Back Better" is the catchphrase of President Biden's economic recovery plan focused on building a clean energy future. A recent report estimated that the 30 gigawatts of offshore wind projects already planned on the U.S. East Coast would support 83,000 jobs and \$25 billion in annual economic output by 2030. Other countries like Germany and the U.K. started more than 10 years ago and are already seeing the employment and other economic benefits. Coos Bay is the largest deep draft coastal harbor from San Francisco to the Puget Sound and well suited to become the hub for this emerging industry harnessing the massive clean energy resource located off Oregon's coast. If the

supply chain, assembly and service operations take root on the south coast, it will diversify the economy of the region and provide many sustainable family-wage jobs. The IEA predicts “offshore wind generation will grow 15-fold in the next 20 years, emerging as a \$1 trillion global industry.” According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, 3 GW of offshore wind development would infuse \$9 - \$21 Billion into Oregon’s economy based on construction and deployment investments.

Offshore wind energy can provide essential benefits to impacted communities. Executive Order 20-04 defines impacted communities as “Native American tribes, communities of color, rural communities, coastal communities, lower-income households, and others”. These are some of the communities that will directly benefit if this new sustainable industry gets established on the south coast of Oregon. It’s also worth noting that coastal communities are particularly vulnerable to power outages. Offshore wind energy will increase and harden their energy security, making the area more resilient during climate driven and other catastrophes like earthquakes.

Offshore wind energy can attract federal funding and the needed private investments. Governments everywhere are trying to restart their economies after the pandemic. Investors around the world are seeking opportunities that lead to a carbon-free economy because they believe that is the future. The Biden/Harris administration’s \$1.9 trillion infrastructure plan states it *“could create millions of high-paying union jobs by building a modern infrastructure and a clean energy future.... Here we are now with an economy in crisis. But with an incredible opportunity, not just to build back to where we were before, but better, stronger more resilient.”* The DOE and the Chair of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Rep. Defazio, have identified offshore wind permitting and clean energy infrastructure as top priorities for federal funding. By establishing a commitment to investigate the potential for responsible offshore wind development, Oregon will hold open an opportunity for rate payer savings of 30% through the offshore wind Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC). Passage of HB 3375 can also attract immediate federal and private investments in assessment, evaluation, and planning for responsibly developed supportive infrastructure.

Sincerely,

Michael Mitton
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