

Chair Beyer and Committee Members:

February 10, 2021

Testimony related to SB 318

This bill causes me concern for the following reasons:

Oregon as a State focuses nearly all it's attention on supporting an antiquated notion that public utilities will continue to purchase, distribute and charge customers for the electricity they use and the costs the utilities incur for purchase and transport of energy. This focus leads to overbuilding industrial wind, solar and transmission infrastructure which is fast becoming a dinosaur for many of the reasons I am assuming motivates bills such as SB 318.

The model that supposes public utilities will continue to have a strangle hold on citizens due to them having no option other than relying upon utilities for their energy is quickly being replaced with a new energy model. This involves more locally generated electricity, the use of microgrids which serve to protect citizens from the blackouts and energy interruption this bill is supposed to avoid, using battery power as a stabilizing source of energy, conservation, energy efficient appliances, etc.

When the legislature focuses on requiring utilities to build or purchase more electricity or infrastructure, it creates a scenario where customers electric bills continue to climb to pay for these additions and it encourages those who can afford to do so to minimize or eliminate most of their reliance on electricity from the grid. I built a cabin and have kept it entirely off the grid. I use solar panels, batteries and conservation and it is more than adequate. People like me are doing things such as this in increasing numbers. In the meantime, in order to meet the "projected" need for electricity, you have the Oregon Department of Energy and Energy Facility Siting Council approving every application that comes to them regardless of the damage to the state wildlife, resources and people that it will cause and the cost to consumers. For example, they just approved replacing the turbines and blades on over 300 wind turbines at the Shepherd Flat Wind development after only 9 years in what is supposed to be a 20-25 year life. What does not get paid for by subsidies will be paid for in electric rates to customers. As more customers get involved in generating their own energy or developing microgrids, etc., those left paying for all the long term costs of the overbuilding that is going on will be the poor people who do not have the options some of us do.

Instead of mandating building, the legislature should be mandating more conservation, putting money toward development of more energy efficient appliances and equipment and subsidizing citizens who are wanting to conserve by offering more subsidies, credits, etc.

This bill should mandate a percentage of projected future growth be addressed through conservation measures, battery backup, or utilizing new technology.

Thank you very much,

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