

Chair Beyer, Vice Chair Boquist, and members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue:

I write to you as the Co-Chair of the Legislative Task Force of the Climate Reality Project, Portland Chapter (CRPDX). **We strongly encourage the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue to pass SB 1519.** Climate Reality Portland represents 300+ members in the Portland metro area who are concerned about and act on the climate crisis.

This bill just makes sense. According to the Oregon Department of Energy (<https://www.oregon.gov/energy/Data-and-Reports/Documents/2020-BER-Energy-by-the-Numbers.pdf#page=51>), energy use in our buildings, residential and commercial, accounts for 43.6% of energy use in our state. Given that climate change is already impacting the lives of all Oregonians through extreme heat, erratic and dangerous weather events, and increased wildfires, destroying our forests, burning homes, farms, and businesses, and dramatically increasing air pollution, it makes sense to reduce emissions from the largest user of energy in Oregon. Making solar more affordable has the potential to significantly increase the use of renewable energy in our homes and businesses.

SB 1519 offers the same tax benefit to individuals participating in community solar projects as previous legislation offered to those installing solar on their buildings. Through SB 1519, those installing or engaging with a community solar program are provided an equivalent property tax exemption. This makes community solar much more attractive to those who desire to increase their use of sustainable energy but cannot install rooftop solar on their buildings for a variety of reasons.

The natural beauty of our state reflects a long legacy of protecting our planet and our natural resources. Support of strong environmental policy, such as 100% Clean Energy by 2040, reflects our state's commitment to ensuring that our children and our children's children inherit a world that is safe and habitable. We believe climate change is an existential crisis threatening that future. Climate Reality, Portland supports policies to affect the rapid adoption of clean and renewable energy sources, protection of our natural environment and the phasing out of fossil fuel sourced energy, all of which contribute to air and water pollution, public health problems, and global warming.

We urge you to support SB 1519.

Thank you,

Karen Harrington

Co-Chair, Legislative Task Force

Climate Reality Project, Portland Chapter