

HB 3179 -4 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

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Meeting Dates: 3/16, 3/28, 4/3

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Requires the Oregon Department of Energy to study permitting requirements for renewable energy facilities and to develop recommendations to improve permitting process. Directs the department to submit a report to an energy related interim committee of the legislature by September 15, 2024. Sunsets January 2, 2025.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

-4 Replaces the measure. Changes the maximum acreage of a solar photovoltaic power generation facility in the context of county planning, zoning, and housing codes, court orders for enforcement, public availability of federal regulations and code provisions, certain waste management statutes, and associated civil penalties to 240 acres when located on high-value farmland, 2,560 acres when located on land that is predominately cultivated or, if not cultivated, is predominately composed of certain soils and 3,840 acres when located on any other land. Prohibits the Oregon Department of Transportation and the county court or board of county commissioners from discriminating against or favoring a renewable energy facility in reviewing or granting siting permits for such facilities to be built on the right of way of certain infrastructures.

REVENUE: May have revenue impact, but no statement yet issued

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, but no statement yet issued

BACKGROUND:

Solar technology is a renewable energy source that harnesses radiant light and heat from the sun to generate electricity. Solar photovoltaic cells, which convert the energy of sunlight photons into electric current, are the most common type of this technology. In 2020 2.89 percent of Oregon's energy was generated via solar technology. Before a large energy facility is built in Oregon a developer must apply for a site certificate from Oregon's Energy Facility Siting Council.

House Bill 3179 would require the Oregon Department of Energy to study permitting requirements for renewable energy facilities, develop recommendations to improve permitting process and to submit a report to an energy related interim committee of the legislature by September 15, 2024.