



February 13, 2023

To: Representative Pam Marsh, Chair, House Climate, Energy and Environment Committee  
Representative Emerson Levy, Vice Chair, House Climate, Energy and Environment Committee  
Representative Bobby Levy, Vice Chair, House Climate, Energy and Environment Committee  
Members of the House Climate, Energy and Environment Committee

From: Diane Brandt, Oregon State Director, Renewable Northwest

Re: **Support for HB2534-1: State Energy Strategy**

*ORAL TESTIMONY AS PREPARED FOR DELIVERY*

Good afternoon, Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy, and Members of the Committee.

For the record, my name is Diane Brandt, Oregon State Director for Renewable Northwest. Renewable Northwest (“RNW”) is a regional, non-profit renewable energy advocacy organization based in Oregon, dedicated to decarbonizing the region by accelerating the transition to renewable electricity. Our members are a combination of renewable energy businesses and environmental and consumer groups.

I’m here today in support of HB 2534 with the -1 amendment which tasks ODOE to create a state energy strategy based on stakeholder input and consideration of the best information/data available to meet Oregon’s energy policies. In short, a roadmap for meeting Oregon’s clean energy and GHG emissions reduction mandates.

We see an energy strategy as an important tool for Oregon to be intentional about its energy transition, understand the options and tradeoffs associated with some energy decisions and infrastructure investments, and generally be a robust resource for discussions involving energy.

There are a lot of existing pieces of this puzzle - from regional studies and plans like the Northwest Power and Conservation Council’s Power Plan or transmission planning from NorthernGrid to utility specific IRPs and the growing volume of ODOE and other state agency studies and outcomes from working groups and task forces - all of these are important and consider pieces of the bigger picture of Oregon’s energy future. A state energy strategy - and the process as outlined in the bill’s -1 amendment - is a central place to bring these pieces together, along with broad stakeholder inputs, to study how they might fit together to show options for Oregon’s energy future.

There are important considerations for studying these pieces, and these are outlined in the amendment, such as ensuring an affordable and reliable electricity supply, making the most of energy efficiency, considering emerging technology, potential land use and natural resources impacts, economic and employment impacts and opportunities, and others.

From our work in the region's energy space, we see a lot of big decisions ahead of us and having a strategy would support these - such as decisions around transmission infrastructure, the land use implications for the amount of renewable energy build required to meet energy demand, how will the state view emerging technologies, are there opportunities for harnessing federal funding, and how are we going to ensure all Oregonians can benefit from this transition as much as practicable, among others.

A state energy strategy would also offer a valuable tool for other state agencies by putting forward a roadmap that can provide direction and support for those state agencies perhaps not directly involved in energy or "in the energy weeds" but are involved in or are impacted by decisions that touch on energy - like land use and natural resources.

From Renewable NW's work in Washington state, we've had the opportunity to see how a state energy strategy can support a state that has renewable energy mandates, like Oregon. It offers a forward looking analysis of existing data and studies to suggest a direction for state agency action, development decisions, and offers a resource for energy policy work.

This bill is not meant to favor any technology or energy resource over another - it is "technology agnostic." Given the ambitious and challenging policy that Oregon has set for itself, it is imperative that ODOE fully evaluate all technologies capable of being utilized in compliance with Oregon's energy laws.

In developing the bill, we heard from various groups on their views of what would be effective in an energy strategy, and also to flag potential concerns. As a result, the current amendment is meant to find a good balance between being clear and directive in what it wants ODOE to accomplish, but also provide enough flexibility that could accommodate considerations we might have missed in drafting the bill or things that might change along the way.

There are several other bills that would ask the state to investigate certain technologies' role in helping Oregon reach its energy mandates or to build strategies for certain types of energy resources. RNW believes that it is imperative that these evaluations are done together, to weigh relative impact, costs and values over time. It is too easy to focus on one particular technology, or one particular set of stakeholders, or one particular problem or opportunity. It is also important to rely on the wealth of analysis that has already been done and not be paralyzed by the allure of the perfect - whether analysis or process. We want to express our gratitude to the many stakeholders who have chosen to join us in supporting this broad based approach rather than pursuing

individualized strategies. The language in the amendment reflects this deconfliction and we appreciate the collaboration.

We also appreciate ODOE's technical advice during the bill's drafting as we sought ways to minimize the fiscal impact of this work.

*END TESTIMONY AS PREPARED*