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March 13, 2023

House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE Salem Oregon 97301

Re: HB 3418 – Support

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chairs Levy, and members of the committee:

Verde is a community-based organization whose mission is to build environmental wealth through organizing, advocacy and social enterprise. We support HB 3418.

HB 3418 will extend the Solar+Storage Rebate program at the Oregon Department of Energy. This is critical for communities across Oregon and for the health of the solar industry. For years, this program has been a successful vehicle to help low- and moderate-income families to access the resilience benefits of solar and battery storage on their homes, as well as affordable housing providers and other entities that serve these communities.

To date, 37% of funds in the Solar+Storage program have gone to benefit low- and moderate-income communities, exceeding the 25% base requirement by over 10%. Resources program-wide have also reached 34 of the 36 counties in Oregon, an impressive demonstration of the statewide need and statewide benefit that can come from the work.

In addition to individual family resilience, the Solar+Storage program can also increase job and apprenticeship opportunities in communities across the state, and keep the folks who do this work already employed throughout the year. This is especially likely with the ability to combine Oregon incentives with the federal dollars that have recently been put in place – and those federal resources also mean that the Oregon program can go further in family budgets or with nonprofit organizations through the expansion of the investment tax credit for renewable energy projects.

HB 3418 is a no-brainer and not passing it may mean that those other incentives are left on the table. The existing rebates are substantial enough to be the difference between a project moving or not. This is every bit as important as Oregon seeks to increase access to renewable energy, replace fossil generation with cleaner sources, and expand planning for the distribution system. Every community in Oregon deserves to be a part of the grid

of the future, and HB 3418 will help families and workers across the state to take part in that important progress.

Respectfully,

Oriana Magnera
Energy, Climate, and Transportation Manager, Verde