

March 13, 2023

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

RE: HB 3152 - SUPPORT

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy, members of the Committee,

Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization that for over 50 years has worked to advance innovative, equitable, and lasting solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 3152, the Utility Consumer Protection Bill, and the -2 amendment.

Thanks to the adoption of Oregon's transformative 100% Clean Electricity law, Climate Protection Program and other recent policies, Oregon is on a path to significantly reduce emissions over the next three decades. As part of our work to ensure an equitable transition to a clean energy future, OEC is committed to fighting for energy affordability, protecting customer choice, and ensuring that Oregon utilities stay on track to achieve their state-mandated emission reduction requirements.

Expanded reliance on fossil fuels not only delays the transition to cost-effective, zero-carbon alternatives—digging us deeper into climate catastrophe—but also comes with an outsized cost and risk for Oregon ratepayers. Especially given recent climate-fueled extreme weather events and continued global gas price volatility, the last thing we should be asking of Oregon families is to shoulder the cost of risky investments in expanded fossil fuel infrastructure. This is especially important for renters and low-income households who are already disproportionately burdened by high energy costs.

By ensuring that customers are only being charged for investments that support utilities' compliance with our clean energy and climate goals and empowering the PUC to keep our state utilities on track, HB 3152 will protect Oregon families from bearing the cost of risky investments in fossil fuel expansion, while maintaining customer choice. We are also pleased to support the -2 amendment, which exempts low income weatherization and low income energy efficiency programs from the bill's requirements.

OEC respectfully urges you to lead in protecting Oregon families from financial risk and ensuring utilities are investing wisely and with Oregonians' best interests in mind, by voting yes on HB 3152 and the -2 amendment.

Thank you for your consideration,

Nora Apter
Climate Program Director
Oregon Environmental Council