



Lake County Board of Commissioners

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Subject: *Lake County Testimony on HB-3004.*

To: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Honorable Chair Pam Marsh, Vice-Chairs Bobby Levy, Emerson Levy and committee members.

Lake County has been home to a number of solar projects over the years, both large and small. We are supportive of energy diversification in general, and have a fair amount of experience with the siting of renewables within our County.

Many of these projects have taken advantage of Strategic Investment Plans (SIPs), payments in lieu of tax (PILoT), and Enterprise Zones. Lake County will likely always be supportive of extending those programs, as they provide great benefit and economic opportunity to Counties and our special districts.

We understand the need for developers to explore different avenues and reduce costs to remain competitive and help our state find solutions to our energy needs. According to ODOE's 2022 Biennial Energy Report, the State of Oregon needs 30 GW of new renewable energy developed in Oregon by 2050. This is a very aggressive goal that would require project development at a pace we have never even come close to in the past, and it would transform the landscape of rural Oregon. So we support appropriate siting and creative thought where we can. However, there are always elements of any bill or concept that can be concerning. **Section 10 of HB3004, titled "Solar Projects: Fee In Lieu of Property Tax"** is one of those elements.

Lake County feels that the current statutory language regarding the fee in lieu of property taxes for utility-scale solar development should be retained: **"not less than \$5,500, and not more than \$7,000, per megawatt of nameplate capacity [of the solar project] for each property tax year."** It is also to our understanding that the proponents of this bill are submitting an amendment to Section 10, or striking it all together, and we appreciate that.

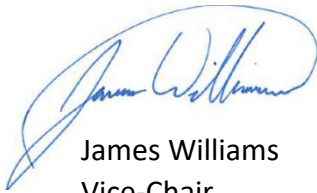
Lake County also has concerns regarding **Section 9 of HB3004, titled "Community Solar Projects"**. The problem we see with permitting a community solar project to participate in these programs, irrespective of the community solar project's nameplate capacity, is that it broadens the definition of "Community Solar" which is currently afforded a multitude of other incentives, and typically aren't larger than 2-3 megawatts.

Senate Bill-54 (which Lake County supports) would provide a property tax exemption for community solar projects. Therefore, how could we now support broadening that definition to not even having a cap?

We understand the developers points of view and appreciate the efforts made in unpacking these complex issues, but these are the current elements of the bill that we would just like to draw attention to on the record, and hope will be addressed.

We feel there is still a lot of work to be done, but are overall supportive of the work Representative Helm has achieved and the conversations being had with developers, local governments, utilities and other parties. There are tremendous challenges in the realm of energy for our state, and Lake County would like to stay involved in those conversations and help find solutions.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration on this matter.



James Williams
Vice-Chair