



## Representative Bobby Levy

*Serving Umatilla, Union & Wallowa Counties*

Hello Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Levy, fellow members of the committee,

For the Record I am Bobby Levy, Representative from House District 58, and I oppose House Bill 2816.

The disappearance of the timber industry thirty years ago left rural Oregon with few sources of large-scale economic development sources that can generate family-wage jobs, revenue for local government, and community growth. Data processing and hosting centers in Umatilla and Morrow Counties and across our state have begun to fill this gap.

HB 2816 is a message to rural Oregon that the interests that drove out our robust, environmentally necessary timber industry intend to retain the poverty resulting from their efforts. Rural Oregon has very few opportunities for economic growth and development, and data hosting and processing centers fill a perfect niche in our remote communities. Warehouses bring construction jobs and retain high-paying information technology jobs, both of which result in commerce for existing and new service businesses. Eliminating these IT positions through energy use mandates that inexorably prevent compliance serves merely to embolden special interests to continue their attacks on rural Oregon's economy.

The -3 amendment is a poor salve to the ultimately devastating impacts of this legislation. Allowing impacted firms to delay implementation over an unspecified period of time is essentially a surrender of the bill's intentions. Firms would ultimately owe their survival to arbitrary and capricious rulings from DEQ, which lacks the staffing, resources, and experience necessary to execute this law. Rather than pass a bill that says impacted firms do not need to comply if they cannot comply, we should simply not pass the law.

With or without amendment's HB 2816's ultimate impact will not be on our climate, but in maintaining the Willamette Valley's economic advantages over rural and specifically Eastern Oregon. We can move past this proposal and instead find better ways to protect our environment that do not retain the damaging legacy of the death of timber.

I urge the Committee to oppose HB 2816 so that data centers around Oregon can continue their hard work of growing the economy and enriching workers.

Best,  
Rep. Bobby Levy, HD 58