

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon

March 20, 2023

Re: HB 2816 and -3 amendment support

Chair Marsh, Vice-Chair Bobby Levy, Vice-Chair Emerson Levy, and members of the House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment,

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Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon and Oregon Interfaith Power & Light (EMO and OIPL) would like to thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 2816. EMO consists of 15 member denominations and over 150 congregations, faith-based organizations, and institutions. We also partner with groups and individuals from many faith traditions to form Oregon Interfaith Power & Light.

In 2021, EMO and OIPL advocated alongside many other organizations and Oregonians for the passage of HB 2021, 100% Clean Energy for Oregon. We are proud of Oregon's commitment to move toward using only energy that is renewable and that does not cause hazards to human and planetary health.

Therefore, we wish to voice support for HB 2816, which strengthens the intention of HB 2021 by ensuring that 100% clean energy generation pertains to all facilities in areas of the state covered by HB 2021.

We reluctantly support the -3 amendment, though we would prefer an amendment that was stronger on greenhouse gas emissions reductions. We would rather have a bill passed than nothing at all, and the -3 amendment will hold future high-energy use facilities to the same standards as the rest of the state for clean energy generation, so together as Oregonians we can reduce our climate impact and contribute toward beneficial public health outcomes. The provisions in the -3 amendment for backup power generation from fossil fuels are fine, and we recognize the necessity of short-term exemptions if renewable energy is not yet available, but we do not agree with exempting facilities operational prior to January 1, 2024 from the standards that pertain to others under HB 2021.

HB 2816 is about fairness and justice. The intention of HB 2021 is for all of Oregon's energy generation to be free of greenhouse gas emissions by 2040. The fact that these high-energy use facilities were not included in that bill was an oversight, which HB 2816 seeks to remedy. Some facilities are making plans to produce their own fossil fuel-based power on-site or diverting it from the proposed GTN XPress pipeline expansion, which would allow them to get out of following the laws for public utility companies. Requiring these facilities to follow the same laws as the rest of the state is fair.

The reason for reducing our state's greenhouse gas emissions has to do with justice, with making sure all our neighbors now and in the

future have a safe, livable, and healthy place to live, work, and breathe. Those who experience the worst public health and climate emergency impacts are often the ones who have done the least to cause the climate crisis. It perpetuates injustice to allow some facilities to not be subject to rules that reduce and mitigate pollution and climate harms. We would like to see a strong bill that holds high-energy use facilities to the same standards as the rest of the state, or at the very least, creates a cap at those facilities' current emissions levels.

Since the major tech companies have already made 100% clean energy pledges, this bill would not place an undue economic burden. This bill would simply ensure these companies meet their pledges, that other companies follow their lead, and that Oregon makes our share of progress toward greenhouse gas reduction goals. The reporting method to the DEQ in the bill is simple and straightforward and will not require extra administrative work on the part of the State or the facilities.

HB 2816 adds fairness to the implementation of HB 2021, leads to more just and equitable outcomes, helps Oregon reach emission reduction goals, and ensures benefits to human health due to reduced air pollution, all of this without harming economic interests. Please support the strongest possible version of HB 2816 that contributes to fair and just outcomes.

Sincerely,

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Creation Justice Advocate
Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon
Oregon Interfaith Power & Light