



March 28, 2023

House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 3181 – Support

Chair Helm, Vice-Hartman, Vice-Chair Owens, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 3181. Central Oregon LandWatch (“LandWatch”) is a conservation organization that, for more than 35 years, has protected Central Oregon’s forests and high desert, rivers and springs, fish and wildlife, and its vibrant communities. We work to conserve the region’s ecosystems, wildlife habitat, and working rural lands balanced with a responsible, sustainable approach to planning and fostering thriving communities.

LandWatch supports HB 3181. This bill would direct ODOE and DLCD to convene a process for finding opportunities and reducing conflict in energy siting. This process is greatly needed. In the last several years, too much local conflict has arisen in the siting of renewable energy facility projects, including and perhaps especially across Central and Eastern Oregon. Much of this conflict is due to a lack of statewide framework for prioritizing ideal sites for renewable energy development, and similar lack of a framework for deprioritizing sites with irreplaceable wildlife habitat or agricultural capability values.

Oregon’s laudable goal to achieve 100% renewable energy is currently somewhat hamstrung by the lack of a planned, coordinated path to get there. HB 3181, in conjunction with HB 2534 which recently passed out of committee and would require the state to develop a comprehensive energy strategy, is a necessary step to planning for a renewable energy future in Oregon. HB 3181 would convene all necessary stakeholders to create a process to reduce conflict in renewable energy siting and achieve a speedy transition to clean energy while planning for wildlife habitat, agricultural lands, and unjust impacts on environmental justice communities. We respectfully request this Committee provide a do-pass recommendation for HB 3181.

Thank you for your consideration of this testimony.

Regards,

Rory Isbell





2843 NW Lolo Drive, Ste. 200 | Bend, OR 97703

Phone (541) 647-2930

www.colw.org

Rural Lands Program Manager & Staff Attorney
Central Oregon LandWatch



WE DEFEND AND PLAN FOR CENTRAL OREGON'S LIVABLE FUTURE