



March 30, 2023

Chair Helm

Vice Chair Owens

Vice Chair Hartman

RE: Support for HB 3179 - 3180

Dear Chair Helm

As owner and operator of PáTu Wind Farm LLC, a 9 mw wind facility that supplies power to approximately 3,000 homes in the Portland area and as owner and manager of the Hilderbrand family farm in Wasco, Oregon, I am writing to give my strongest support of HB 3179-2.

Oregon needs to fast track solar siting in areas of Eastern Oregon – especially along the high, arid plateau of the Columbia River. We have challenging renewable energy decarbonization goals that must be met from HB 2021. This area of Oregon can provide much valuable land for solar installation adjacent to already installed and available transmission.

The land is not lost but only put into an alternative use until other sources of energy are developed. This is an area that is primarily dry land, summer fallow (one crop every 2 years), winter wheat production. Due to our low rain fall and climate the wheat raised in this area is only sold for export to Asia (with the assistance of federal and state subsidies). The wheat does not have a milling quality that is sufficient for bread, pasta, or pastry flour in the US.

When my family first started farming in the area during the 1880's, they grazed sheep on the rich, natural bunch grasses that were present. With pressure from the Oregon cattle and sheep wars much of this land was ploughed and converted to wheat production. I want to use solar on my land, and many of my neighbors want the same. Natural grasses will be replanted to improve the soil and sequester carbon. In 40—50 year the solar can be removed and farming can be resumed on improved soils.

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But that permitting process is too cumbersome and stifling currently. HB 3179 - 3180 will improve this process.

If we do not allow for alternative uses, despite the protestations of the Oregon Wheat Growers, Oregon Farm Bureau and 1000 Friends – we will continue to see more consolidation of farms and the continued loss of family farms. We are in a crisis with energy and climate change – we cannot delay.

Please move the bill forward.

Sincerely,



Ormand Hilderbrand

me Wind, Randy Joseph



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