



Matt Hutchinson
Business Developer

March 29, 2023

To: Chair Helm and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use,
Natural Resources and Water

Re: Support of HB 3180

Chair Helm and members of the Committee,

Avangrid Renewables (“Avangrid”) supports HB 3180 because it helps give greater regulatory certainty to solar projects near existing infrastructure and attempts to identify lower conflict sites for solar development. Nearly all utility-scale solar projects in Oregon are required to seek an exception from Statewide Planning Goal 3 related to agricultural. The rules governing a Goal 3 exception are subjective and incredibly discretionary, which in our experience, can leave county decision makers and the Oregon Energy Facility Siting Council with little guidance when considering Goal 3 exception requests. This subjectiveness of review add risks and uncertainty to solar development as each new project faces an unpredictable outcome. We believe that the permitting for solar projects should involve a rigorous review of impact to agricultural lands but seek a more workable regulatory framework as it relates to Goal 3 exceptions.

As the owner of the largest solar projects in Oregon, Avangrid believes that utility solar projects will be a key part of Oregon future renewable energy infrastructure to achieve the state’s decarbonization goals. But the current land use system disfavors solar projects, and HB 3180 could be an incremental step to allowing development of some solar projects in certain circumstances when projects are near existing transmission lines and on lands without irrigation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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