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**The Community Renewable Energy Association's Testimony in Support of HB 3179A  
Senate Energy and Environment Committee  
May 3, 2023**

Good afternoon Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Findley and Members of the Committee:

The Community Renewable Development Association (CREA) is an ORS 190 intergovernmental association with members that include counties, irrigation districts, councils of government, project developers, for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations. Our members include the counties where a large portion of renewable energy is being developed.

Thank you for the opportunity to support of HB 3179A. This bill aligns with our goals to see more renewable energy facilities sited locally & as efficiently as possible in the state of Oregon.

The bill does two things:

1. Allows more projects to be approved at the county level, instead of at the state level.
2. Requires that the Oregon Department of Transportation fairly consider renewable projects when reviewing siting requests in the right-of-way.

We support counties being able to approve project with larger acreages. We've heard from our developer members that getting projects approved at the county level is often preferable for them because the state process takes longer, is more costly, and does not have the same level of local control or participation. We believe it is helpful for developers to have the option to go through either process. I'll note our county members, who will be impacted by this legislation, are supporting this bill to expand the number of projects that will be eligible to go through their local processes.

There are many projects in BPA's Interconnection Queue looking for permits. This bill will help provide the flexibility to accommodate getting those projects permitted in a timely manner.

Counties have already been successful approving many projects and we believe it is once again time to increase the size of projects counties can approve. Please pass HB 3179A. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Mike McArthur  
CREA Executive Director