

Battery Energy Storage Systems Permitting Pathways

Support for HB 4015

What is BESS?

A Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) is a device that collects energy from the electric grid or a generating resource, such as a wind or solar plant, and then discharges that energy at a later time to provide electricity or other grid services when needed. Benefits of BESS include:

- Increasing resilience on the electricity grid
- Protecting against energy blackouts
- Enabling a more local, or distributed, approach to electricity supply
- Decreasing reliance on long-range energy transmission

Why Should Oregon Be Preparing for BESS?

Oregon has set an ambitious path to 100% clean energy by 2040. In 2020, Oregon met less than 9% of its electricity demand with solar, wind, and geothermal generated electricity. In the regulatory space, electric utilities indicate they will need to procure 4-6 GW of battery storage by 2040 – enough energy to power up to 4.5 million homes. Additionally, BESS is an emerging technology that will play a part in supporting the transmission system in Oregon, which is currently severely constrained.

However, an obstacle that battery development faces is limited permitting options, coupled by the emergence of a new and quickly changing technology. Through HB 4015, Oregon will shine as a leader by proactively working to address BESS - identifying a new permitting pathway for stand-alone batteries at the county and state level, while retaining thorough land use review and scrutiny.

How HB 4015 Prepares Oregon for BESS:

1. Adds definition of "Battery Energy Storage System" to statute
2. Clarifies the BESS permitting process, when BESS is sited in conjunction with a generation facility (ex. wind, solar)
3. Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) Permitting Pathway where a developer or local government can defer permitting regulatory authority to EFSC, if requested, for a BESS site certificate



NW Energy Coalition
for a clean and affordable energy future