



Chair Solman and Committee Members,

The ZERO Coalition supports SB 92 and the -2 amendment, which seeks to provide some definition, clarity, and certainty for the Oregon Community Solar Program and extends the program.

The ZERO Coalition advocates for equitable building decarbonization and clean energy access across Oregon. Community solar aligns with our mission by providing affordable clean energy access to renters, low-income households, and businesses without requiring on-site solar installation. With Oregon's Community Solar Program (CSP) nearing capacity, urgent action is needed to expand the program and ensure long-planned projects move forward. Without expansion, millions in household energy savings and critical climate benefits will be lost. Supporting community solar means reducing energy costs, increasing resilience, and making the clean energy transition accessible to all.

SB 92-2 will empower Oregon with real energy independence all while delivering more choices, more competition, cost stability to all ratepayers, and more opportunity for everyone.

Community solar is an energy solution that empowers anyone with an electric bill to choose affordable, locally generated solar power without needing to install a system on site. Each project has multiple subscribers who buy the energy and receive credit on their electricity bill for their portion of power produced. It gives citizens and businesses the choice to participate and does not require state funding or state subsidies.

We understand the community solar program passed by the legislature in 2016 will soon need to stop accepting applications, with no immediate plans to expand or continue the program. Compared to other state's community solar programs, Oregon barely registers on the national map with its caps on project and program size. This legislation will increase those caps set by the Public Utility Commission and fulfill the legislative intent from 2016 of creating a workable and sustainable program.

Why we support community solar:

- Ensures equitable access to clean energy for low-income households and advances climate resilience in Oregon.
- Community solar saves money for residents and for local businesses/governments.
- Community solar provides a choice for Oregon residents to advance renewable energy, even if they are renters or are experiencing low incomes. It's the only way that low-income ratepayers can receive 100% clean energy at a discount, just like a homeowner with solar would.
- Every community solar project has a 10% low-income subscriber, who receive about a 20% discount. There are also community solar projects that have over 50% low-income subscribers, providing bill savings to those that need it most.
- Community solar generates large economic benefits for small businesses, landowners, contractors, and subscribers.
- Community solar strengthens the grid with non-utility investments in the distribution system.
- Community solar helps Oregon achieve its climate goals.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration on how to provide Oregonians with the certainty that they can invest in and benefit from community solar into the future.

Regards,

The ZERO Coalition