



March 6, 2025

Re: HB 3546 (POWER Act) SUPPORT

House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment

Chair Lively, Vice-Chair Gamba, Vice-Chair Levy, and Committee Members:

Friends of the Columbia Gorge (“Friends”) is a non-profit organization with approximately 5,000 members. Friends is dedicated to protecting and enhancing the scenic, cultural, recreation, and natural resources of the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area (“Gorge”). Friends’ interests include energy generation, energy transmission, and other effects of data centers on the people, wildlife, water resources, cultural resources, and scenic beauty of the National Scenic Area.

Friends strongly supports HB 3546 Protecting Oregonians with Energy Responsibility (POWER Act) which will require large energy users to pay their fair share. As has been seen over the last few years, the demand for energy in the state is growing, largely due to the construction of new data centers to power AI, cryptocurrency, and other emerging technologies.

Large-scale energy users, primarily data centers run by large technology companies, use disproportionately more energy than household and business consumers, but the effects of their energy strain on the grid are currently distributed to all consumers through rate hikes. As more data centers are constructed to power new digital technologies, our state’s energy grid will also need to grow, requiring significant investments from the utility companies. It would be unfair to household and small business consumers to pass the costs of these investments on to them through rate increases.

The POWER Act seeks to create a solution by creating a new category of large-scale energy users at each for-profit utility who are given a different rate schedule to ensure that they are contributing in proportion to their impact on the system. This bill is a common sense solution that will give our electric utility companies the capital they need to invest in larger capacities for Oregon’s energy systems.

We ask that you please support HB 3546 to protect Oregon’s energy consumers from shouldering the effects of energy usage from data centers and other large-scale users.

Sincerely,
Madison Kenney
Conservation Organizer