

Submitter: Debby Garman

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3546

House Committee on Climate, Energy & Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

March 7, 2025

RE: HB 3546 (POWER Act) - SUPPORT

Chair Lively and Members of the Committee,

Oregonians are facing rising utility costs, in part due to the rapidly growing energy demands of data centers and other big tech operations. These facilities consume massive amounts of electricity, straining our grid and driving up energy costs—while not paying their fair share.

I am happy to share information on a newly released study done by the Harvard Law School Energy and Environmental program that clearly documents abuses by big corporations unfair and unwarranted passing along of Data Center development costs to unwitting consumers. Here is the link to that information.

<https://eelp.law.harvard.edu/extracting-profits-from-the-public-how-utility-ratepayers-are-paying-for-big-techs-power/>

The Protecting Oregonians With Energy Responsibility (POWER) Act (HB 3546) will ensure that data centers and other large energy users in Oregon contribute fairly to grid infrastructure and energy costs. Oregon families and small businesses are already struggling. They should not be footing the bill for giant corporations.

The POWER Act will ensure that utility costs can be tracked and billed appropriately to data centers by creating a new customer category at each for-profit electric utility. HB 3546 protects families and small businesses from paying for data center-specific costs when these new users are connected to the energy grid and when they add new costs to the system in the future.

Today, Oregon's consumer-owned utilities in BPA territory have these tools, but the Public Utility Commission and investor-owned utilities do not have all the tools they need to shield residential customers from grid infrastructure costs that big energy users will require going forward to build transmission and resources to serve them.

This bill gives them the same tools to be able to do that going forward.

On behalf of myself and many many friends and neighbors, I urge you to support HB 3546 to ensure that Oregonians are not unfairly subsidizing large energy users like data centers with our power bills.

Thank you,

Debby Garman
Hillsboro, Oregon