



www.RogueClimate.org || PO Box 1980, Phoenix, OR 97535 || 541-301-9204

Coos Bay Office: 243 S. 2nd St. Coos Bay, OR 97420 || 541- 816-0758

Re: Rogue Climate Testimony regarding HB 3546

Dear Chair Lively and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 3546: Relating to large energy use facilities; declaring an emergency.

Rogue Climate serves and works alongside Southern Oregon and South Coast communities most impacted by climate change, including low-income, rural, youth, and communities of color, by organizing for clean energy, sustainable jobs, and a healthy environment. We do so through leadership development, political education, and campaigns for policies that benefit our communities.

Oregon households are hitting their limit with utility costs, as evidenced by the state's largest for-profit utilities raising residential billing rates by nearly 50% since 2021 and our two largest electric utilities disconnecting a record-breaking nearly 58,000 households last year. A [2024 ACEEE study](#) found that households that identify as low-income, African American, Latinx, or Native are more likely to be energy burdened and face a higher energy burden than the average household. Households in rural communities are also more likely to be energy burdened, with [30-39% of households](#) in Jackson and Coos county facing severe energy burdens while also earning [less than \\$15,060 per year](#).

We have seen other states struggle to meet energy needs as data centers have boomed. The Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee has [projected](#) electricity demand to grow 30% in the region in the next decade, due in large part to Oregon's large and growing data center market. Oregon needs to protect our energy systems as well as affordability.

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. The Protecting Oregonians With Energy Responsibility (POWER) Act (HB 3546) gives them the tools to be able to do that going forward by making for-profit utilities identify the costs that these large energy users are adding to the system—and make them pay their share. By creating a special category for these customers, regulators can protect Oregonians from covering the cost of these businesses.

We urge you to support HB 3546 to protect Oregonians who are already struggling to tighten their budgets due to rising energy costs.



www.RogueClimate.org || PO Box 1980, Phoenix, OR 97535 || 541-301-9204

Coos Bay Office: 243 S. 2nd St. Coos Bay, OR 97420 || 541- 816-0758

Sincerely,

Jess Grady-Benson, Organizing Director

Zoe Serrano, Legislative Coordinator