



350PDX
3625 N. Mississippi Avenue
Portland, OR 97227
350pdx.org

March 6, 2025

Re: Support HB 3546, the POWER Act

Dear Chair Lively, Co-chairs Gamba and B. Levy, and members of the House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment,

As a grassroots nonprofit organization focused on climate and environmental issues with thousands of members in the Portland area, 350PDX commends to you HB 3546 and encourages you to vote in support of this bill. The POWER Act draws important attention to the issue of data centers and other large energy use facilities by creating a new customer class.

We are concerned that these large energy use facilities: a) will make it difficult for Oregon to meet our clean energy targets, and b) should pay their fair share for bringing these massive new electricity loads onto the grid. It is important that we plan and consider carefully as a state regarding how much energy we can safely generate and still stay within our emissions reduction goals. We must also make sure we allocate the energy equitably so it goes to people who need it for heating and cooling their homes and essential services such as hospitals before using energy (and water) for data centers.

The demand for energy has increased year after year. Hardworking Oregonians have felt it especially in their pocketbooks, with rates increasing with seemingly no end in sight. This isn't due to a massive increase in the state's population; rather it is due to "big tech" firms expanding their energy-hogging data centers and other facilities. For PGE alone, the energy use for data centers is the equivalent of adding over 400,000 individual Oregonians to the system. This, in turn, forces the utility companies to ramp up household energy prices to subsidize the cost of running the data centers.

This is where HB 3546 comes in. Instead of recklessly allowing big tech companies to operate within our state without paying their share, this bill seeks to create a mandatory plan (contract). Any large energy user will have to sign a minimum 10-year contract for the provision of electricity. This contract not only brings in a guarantee of future payment but also includes a penalty if they use more energy than they are allocated. This penalty is key in protecting Oregonian ratepayers from future price increases.

This isn't all this bill does — it does one other fundamentally important thing: protect our clean energy goals and in turn protect our environment. HB 3546 requires the Public Utility Commission (PUC) to consider whether approving a given contract would impede the

Building the climate justice movement.



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involved electric company's ability to meet state-mandated clean energy and emissions targets. This ensures that Oregon will continue to remain on track on its journey to 100% clean energy by 2050.

We would like to see an amendment to this bill (or a different bill) to address the water needs of large energy use facilities, especially relating to AI.

HB 3546 represents a proactive and necessary step toward ensuring that we work together to develop industries while also meeting Oregon's sustainability and climate goals, and while ensuring energy costs are affordable for customers. By holding large energy facilities accountable for their usage, Oregon can guarantee that sustainable energy practices are adhered to while also safeguarding the wellbeing of all its residents.

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