

Submitter: Troy Jones
On Behalf Of: Friends of Gap Road
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3422

Thank you Chair Lively and Climate, Energy and Environment Committee members for this opportunity to provide testimony for HB3422. I am in SUPPORT of HB3422.

I belong to a group called Friends of Gap Road. We are a group of neighbors, ranchers and farmers who are opposing a proposed 1588 acre solar facility on the I-5 corridor just North of Eugene, Oregon; and 10 miles due East of Harrisburg OR. While HB3422 will not have any impact in our opposition to the Muddy Creek Energy Park, we assisted to develop HB3422 out of our concern for the negative impacts this proposed project has caused for our rural neighborhood.

To me, HB3422 has always been about Equity or Parity. In this day and age where equity is so very important to us all. It seems unusual and out of the ordinary the Energy Facility Siting Council is not required to consider an Alternative Analysis, whereas, the LCDC does require this Alternative Analysis of our local County and City government.

I believe it import to recognize the lack of an Alternative Analysis steers Utility Sized Solar Applicants to the easier path; Toward the Energy Facility Siting Council. Due to this fact, Solar applicants have and easier path to siting on Exclusive Farm Use lands. This scenario allows solar applicants, essentially, to "pick the low hanging fruit". Relatively flat lands, unobstructed and easy access allows for less expense to the applicants. This makes for an easy "business" decision on both counts. I am quite concerned for our Exclusive Farm Use lands.

For the Committee's consideration, I did a quick review of current projects and applications before the Energy Facility Siting Council. "Rough numbers" are 70,000 acres... most are proposed on zoned EFU land. I also believe it import to point out to the committee.... I have heard previous comments (and opinions) HB3422 would, essentially, stop all utility sized projects in the State of Oregon. It is important for the Climate, Energy and Environment Committee to recognize that Alternative Analysis is simply a "check" to insure other viable options don't exist prior to using our Exclusive Farm Use lands. It would simply insure the inappropriate misuse of our EFU lands.

In, closing.... Protection of one of Oregon's most precious resources should take priority here. This matter does cross the aisle where both Democrats and Republicans can find common ground on this matter. Please recommend HB3422 to be moved forward toward becoming State Law.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Sincerely,

Troy Jones