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Danelle Romain, on behalf of OPUDA

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee,

My name is Danelle Romain and our firm (The Romain Group) has been proudly representing the Oregon People's Utility District Association (called OPUDA) in front of the Oregon Legislature for over 10 years. OPUDA's members include six People's Utility Districts (known as PUDs) which provide electric service in Oregon. We've provided the Committee with district maps showing the large territories we serve, including nearly two-thirds of the Oregon coastline, parts of Columbia and Multnomah counties, Lane County, and as far east as Wasco County.

In Oregon, PUDs are governed by five-member Boards of Directors that are elected by voters in each PUD's service area. Each Board of Directors sets rates based on the costs of providing service. Most PUD's power supplies are provided by the Bonneville Power Administration. PUDs provide at-cost rates to their customers. Each board member is elected to represent the communities served, and board meetings are open to the public.

Oregon's electric PUDs collectively serve over 200,000 people and deliver over 4.5 billion kilowatt hours of electricity to Oregonians annually. OPUDA member utilities provided over 400 family wage jobs in rural communities in 2018, representing more than \$60 million in salary and benefits, much of which stayed in our local communities. PUDs also pay property taxes and franchise fees. During 2018, we paid over \$10 million in property taxes and franchise fees to the counties and cities we serve.

Oregon PUDs provide their customers with electricity that is near-zero carbon, which is one of the highest rates of clean energy in the United States. Oregon has deployed the highest concentration of renewable generation in the country through the Pacific Northwest's Federal Hydro System. PUDs have developed additional renewable energy including cogeneration, wood waste, bio-mass, agricultural waste, landfill gas, and "fish-friendly" hydropower. Oregon's PUDs offer innovative energy solutions supporting renewable energy such as solar and wind, energy efficiency programs and conservation as a resource. Additionally, since the mid-1970s, Oregon PUDs have made major investments in energy efficiency and conservation programs, helping their customers reduce energy consumption. PUDs are on-track to exceed the Northwest Power and Conservation Council targets for energy efficiency savings.

A diverse mix of baseload power supply resources is crucial. A solid mix of power sources reduces operational and financial risk, and helps PUDs maintain safe, reliable, clean and affordable service for our rural customer base now and in the future.

PUDs are small in terms of the number of customers served compared to Oregon's privately-owned utilities. In one PUD service territory, for example, one industrial customer represents nearly one-third of the total customer energy load. In that way, PUDs are dependent on our industrial customers remaining viable, not only because industrial customers help smooth rates for residential customers, but also because they bolster the economy providing jobs critical to our communities.

Oregon PUDs are eager to serve as a resource to assist the Committee with your work this session. We have several energy experts on our team and we look forward to a productive legislative session.