

January 29, 2019

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Idaho Power Supports Oregon Public Utilities Commission 2019-2021 Budget Request

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in support of the Oregon Public Utility Commission's ("OPUC" or "Commission") 2020-2021 proposed budget. For more than 100 years, Idaho Power Company ("Idaho Power" or "Company") has served customers in southern Idaho and eastern Oregon with reliable, fair-priced energy. Today, Idaho Power serves approximately 542,000 customers, including more than 18,000 customers in Oregon. Idaho Power appreciates and values its regulatory relationships with both the Oregon and Idaho Public Utility Commissions.

In recent discussions with OPUC Staff ("Staff") leadership, Idaho Power shared the impacts the Company experiences as a result of increased Staff employee turnover as well as the relative frequency of reassignment of duties among Staff. While utility regulation is largely based on fundamental policies and practices that are applied consistently across all regulated utilities, each utility's rates and services have unique characteristics specific to that utility and are typically based upon years of regulatory history. Each time a Staff new employee is assigned to an Idaho Power issue or case, Company employees must spend extra time establishing relationships with the new Staff member, and in some cases, serving in an educational role. These activities take additional time and effort, and therefore more labor dollars.

It is the Company's understanding that the OPUC has recently modified its organizational structure with one of its goals being increased continuity of leadership and Staff support related to utility relations and case support. It is also the Company's understanding that the seven additional full-time positions at issue in this budget request are a part of the OPUC's organizational restructuring plan. Idaho Power supports the OPUC's goals with its restructuring plan and believes that the effort will result in increased administrative efficiencies and long-term cost savings for Oregon utility customers.

Idaho Power appreciates the OPUC's efforts in these areas and supports its request to increase staffing levels by seven positions funded in part through an increase in the utility fee from .30

percent to .45 percent. Thank you again for allowing Idaho Power to comment in support of the Oregon Public Utility Commissions 2019-2021 proposed budget.

We appreciate your public service to the State of Oregon.

Sincerely,

Tim Tatum
Idaho Power Vice President of Regulatory Affairs