

TO: Oregon House Energy and Environment Committee
FROM: Daphne Wysham, Sustainable Energy & Economy Network
RE: Oregon HB 2242
DATE: January 29, 2019

Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee,

The Sustainable Energy & Economy Network (SEEN) is a 501(c)(4) non-profit organization based in Portland, OR. We are a network of grassroots activists that are working to ensure that elected officials live up to their moral obligation to do all they can to preserve a stable climate for present and future generations. SEEN supports Oregon HB 2242 because the legislative approach was crafted by informed community advocates who participated in the Oregon SB 978 process. SB 978 was one of the first opportunities for community-based organizations to participate in the regulatory process and they were only able to do so through financial support in the form of intervenor funding. As we address the climate crisis, it is important to empower impacted and marginalized communities in the Oregon Public Utility Commission's (OPUC) processes; increased participation from these communities will improve regulatory outcomes related to equity and affordability.

SEEN advocates for a rapid and just transition away from fossil fuels to a 100 percent renewable energy platform and an energy efficient economy. To this end, SEEN supports strong reforms that would empower the OPUC to act on climate change, affordability, and environmental justice. A rapid transition away from fossil fuels will necessitate protection of and support for low-income communities. Without a mandate to "consider differential energy burdens on low-income consumers and other economic, social equity or environmental justice factors that affect affordability for certain classes of a utility's customers" and the mandatory participation of groups representing low-income and marginalized communities, we believe it is unlikely that that this protection and support will be as strong and well-informed as it must be.

Additionally, although we believe that the OPUC's report to the Oregon Legislature insufficiently represented voices throughout the process and did not make a strong enough ask for legislative action, the SB 978 process empowered many grassroots and community organizations to participate in a process in which, in prior years, they would have been unable to participate. Dozens of organizations are far more knowledgeable about the OPUC's processes and regulations than before. One outcome of that increased education is HB 2242 and the desire for continued participation.

We support Oregon HB 2242 and look forward to this bill moving swiftly through the Oregon Legislature.

Thank you for your consideration,

Daphne Wysham
Director, Sustainable Energy & Economy Network <http://www.seen.org>