



**Testimony of Ted Case, Executive Director
Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA) on SB 408
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
February 26, 2019**

Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Olsen, and Members of the Committee. For the record, I am Ted Case, the Executive Director of the Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA). ORECA represents 18 electric cooperatives that serve nearly 500,000 Oregonians in some of the most rural and remote parts of the state.

ORECA urges your support of SB 408 as amended by the Dash 1. Providing electric service to rural Oregonians is an often arduous task involving a patchwork of laws and regulations. This bill addresses a gap in the tool box for land use decision makers to subdivide EFU for utility facilities necessary for public service. While the issue came to light when Morrow County was trying to subdivide land into a smaller parcel for an approved substation on EFU property, we have found that the situation is not isolated to northeastern Oregon. In addition to the compelling testimony you will hear today, I urge you to review the testimony from Hood River Electric Cooperative that describes how this proposal could help improve reliability of the electric grid in the Columbia Gorge.

ORECA commends the bipartisan leadership of Senators Hansell and Manning, along with Rep. Greg Smith. We also want to highlight the work of Alec Shebiel of Umatilla Electric Cooperative in bringing together a diverse group of sponsors and stakeholders to advance this important legislation. We urge the Committee to pass SB 408 as amended.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our testimony.