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February 28, 2019

Helping to shape the use of our natural resources to protect the quality of life in Yamhill County.

Via e-mail: hee.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

House Committee on Energy and Environment
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97901

RE: Testimony in Opposition to HB 2329

Chair Helm and members of the Committee:

Friends of Yamhill County works to protect natural resources through the implementation of land use planning goals, policies, and laws that maintain and improve the present and future quality of life in Yamhill County for both urban and rural residents.

We are proud to have taken an active role in the local discussion of appropriate siting of smaller scale solar installation within the County. However, this bill requires counties to review large infrastructure projects with no financial or technical support. This bill would result in energy projects of all sizes, regardless of complexity, being reviewed through the local county land use process. Counties, especially rural counties with low populations and fewer local government resources, lack capacity to address and review the complex siting issues relating to these large projects.

Energy infrastructure development is inherently a statewide issue, not conducive to being reviewed at the local level with no coordination. We and our neighbors had been participating for some months now in discussions with statewide agencies and groups to make the initiative as fair and effective as possible. EFSC's process may not be the perfect vehicle, but we urge you to focus on improving that process for all participants, including the public, instead of such wholesale change.

Most counties have not updated their Goal 5 resources inventories for many years. We are concerned that if large projects with substantial conflicts with wildlife habitat are sited through a county process, there will be no coordination with ODFW or adherence to their mitigation programs, which are connected to Oregon's larger Conservation Strategy. This type of ad hoc approach to siting will have negative impacts on Oregon's efforts to conserve species and habitats across the state.

Friends of Yamhill County wholeheartedly supports Oregon's goals to divest of fossil fuel dependence and reduce carbon emissions. We believe that limiting nonfarm development in rural and natural resource areas has the benefit of reducing carbon emissions (increased travel distances) as well as the potential to invigorate rural cities and towns. We do not see the EFSC process as a barrier to those goals, as many renewable energy projects have been successfully site through EFSC.

We urge the Legislature to focus on how to achieve a sustainable, appropriate and successful siting process that meets the needs of all stakeholders by improving the current process. For these and other reasons presented in other testimony, we request that you oppose this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Jernstedt

Kathryn Jernstedt
President
Friends of Yamhill County

Cc: Representative Ron Noble

HB 2329 FYC