



Testimony in OPPOSITION of HB 2329 (Energy Facilities Siting)

To: House Committee On Energy and Environment
From: Central Oregon LandWatch
Date: March 5, 2019

Mr. Chair, members of the Committee:

Please accept this letter as a statement of strong opposition to HB 2329, which would drastically and negatively impact Oregon's land use system in regard to the siting of energy facilities.

Central Oregon LandWatch has a mission of achieving a responsible, balanced approach to planning for and conserving Oregon's land and water resources east of the Cascades, while recognizing the needs of future generations. We work to protect and conserve the region's ecosystems and wildlife habitats, to foster thriving, sustainable communities, and to spread the costs and benefits of growth equitably across the community as a whole.

HB 2329 is inconsistent with that mission and undermines the integrity of our State land use system by shifting the responsibility of reviewing large energy infrastructure projects to local governments, without the benefit of the requisite financial or technical support. The process in siting such facilities (that may range in the tens of thousands of acres!) is incredibly complex and requires adherence not only to questions of zoning and existing infrastructure, but also questions regarding wildlife management, cultural impacts, water resources, and an expansive public involvement process.

This measure risks turning a well-managed state process into an ad hoc local process for seemingly vague reasons: the Energy Facilities Siting Council is not generally regarded as a barrier to these kinds of projects.

This measure is an unpredictable and potentially damaging "solution" in search of a problem that has not been shown to exist. While Oregon's renewable energy goals are laudable, we believe they are achievable without sacrificing our statewide land use system. We urge a NO vote.