



TESTIMONY

Joint Ways & Means Natural Resources Subcommittee

June 10, 2019

Testimony on HB 2329 and the -5 amendments

Co-Chairs Taylor and Reardon and Members of the Committee:

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) continues to oppose moving away from the current balance struck by Oregon law in sending projects through the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) process versus the local county land use process. We are concerned that HB 2329 would allow large-scale solar projects on nonhigh value arable and non-arable lands to forum shop between the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) and local county governments when siting their projects. We believe that large scale solar projects are most appropriately analyzed through the EFSC process and urge you to oppose this bill.

At any rate, we want to make it clear that HB 2329 and the -5 amendments does not supplant the current solar siting standards that were recently updated through a rulemaking with the Department of Land Conservation and Development (DLCD). DLCD recently spent significant time and resources in a rulemaking to update the standards for siting solar in the Willamette Valley, which resulted in banning solar developments on Class I and II farmland – Oregon’s most valuable and productive farmland.

As we read the -5 amendments, this bill does not eliminate the existing solar siting standards as it relates to the recent rulemaking undertaken by DLCD or the existing rules that apply to renewable energy development. Generally, the renewable energy facilities authorized under the bill would exceed the acreage thresholds identified in the DLCD rules, and they would require a Goal 3 exception. We continue to oppose these changes, but wanted to make it clear that this bill will not provide the sole standards for renewable energy development.

Please contact Mary Anne Cooper at maryanne@oregonfb.org if you have any questions.