



**Testimony of Ted Case, Executive Director
Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association (ORECA) on HB 4167
House Committee on Rules
February 20, 2020**

Chair Holvey, Vice-Chairs Drazen and Smith-Warner, 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 in Oregon serving over a half-million Oregonians and a land mass of nearly three-quarters of the state. ORECA appreciates the opportunity to comment on HB 4167.

First, we want to thank the Legislature and the Carbon Policy Office for working constructively with Consumer-Owned Utilities (COUs) on provisions that impact the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and utilities that rely upon the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS). As a result of these conversations, ORECA believes that several provisions in HB 4167 will help BPA and COUs transition into a cap and trade program.

However, a recent development clearly shows that the State of Oregon's carbon policies are not aligned but, in fact, wildly divergent. ORECA is extremely disappointed with Governor Brown's decision to support the breaching of the four lower Snake River dams. The Snake River dams produce over 1,000 average megawatts of reliable, carbon-free energy – enough energy for over 800,000 Northwest homes. Governor Brown's decision, made without any consultation with leaders of consumer-owned utilities, will have severe consequences for our mission of providing affordable, reliable electricity. And it moves the State of Oregon in the wrong direction concerning carbon reduction, while putting the reliability of our electric grid at risk.

Governor Brown's course of action is estimated to increase CO2 emissions *by over 2 million metric tons* – every year. This output is approximately the equivalent of adding 421,000 passenger cars to the region's roads each year. Furthermore, the Northwest Power and Conservation Council – for whom Governor Brown has appointed two Oregon members – has concluded that the Northwest power supply becomes inadequate as early as next year. Taking out the lower Snake River dams, which help keep our region's power and transmission systems in balance, could lead to the crashing of the electrical grid and blackouts for Oregonians.

We believe Governor Brown should not pursue ill-fated policies that will harm rural Oregonians or the environment. She should also embrace the Northwest's preeminent renewable resource – the federal hydropower program – instead of supporting proposals to tear it down. Only then can we have a serious discussion about carbon reduction in Oregon. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on HB 4167.