



March 4, 2021

To: Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Owens, Vice Chair Reardon, and Members of the House Committee on Water

RE: Testimony in Support of HB 3221, the Oregon Renewable Options Program

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Owens, Vice Chair Reardon, and Members of the Committee:

Black Rock Consulting, Inc. is sending this letter in support of HB 3221, the Oregon Renewable Options program.

Black Rock Consulting, Inc. provides a range of water resources engineering services to irrigation districts, resources agencies, and municipal water providers. We have over 22 years of experience in Oregon supporting irrigation districts working to modernize their water infrastructure and install hydropower. Just in the last three years, my company's engineering plans have helped irrigation districts in Central Oregon to convert 30 miles of leaking canals into pressurized pipes. This work supports millions of dollars in local construction jobs, water restoration and endangered species protection efforts in the Deschutes River, and makes farmers more resilient against drought.

I have seen firsthand the value that conduit hydropower can bring to water providers by creating a revenue stream that can pay for additional modernization activities. In my engineering role, I have identified dozens of potential conduit hydropower locations in irrigation districts across Oregon that haven't been able to move forward. When the power rates paid to these projects average 2-3 cents per kilowatt hour, it is almost impossible to make the finances work. It is hard to understand how these rates are so low when you and I pay closer to 11 cents for the power we purchase at home.

HB 3221 would give local projects a chance to get the power rates they need to be successful. That success will lead to significant and on-going economic development opportunities in rural Oregon and produce clean electrons for our power grid.

I hope you will support HB 3221.

Sincerely,

BLACK ROCK CONSULTING, INC.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K. Crew", with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Kevin L. Crew, P.E.
President