



**College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric
Sciences**

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Senator Kathleen Taylor
Representative Jeff Reardon
Co-chairs, Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Oregon State Legislature

Dear Senator Taylor and Representative Reardon,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of the 2021–2023 Governor’s Recommended Budget for the Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE).

I serve as director of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute (OCCRI), which is hosted by the College of Earth, Ocean, and Atmospheric Sciences at Oregon State University (OSU). OCCRI was created in 2007 by the Oregon State Legislature under House Bill 3543. OCCRI seeks to achieve a climate-prepared state and region by building a climate knowledge network, cultivating climate-informed communities, and advancing understanding of regional climate, its effects, and adaptation.

The relevance and quality of OCCRI’s work is enhanced by its long-term collaboration with ODOE. Our partnership ensures that the work of OCCRI complements that of ODOE, maximizing the state’s return on investment. For example, areas of emphasis in OCCRI’s sustained climate-science assessments and biennial Oregon Climate Assessments are informed by the reliable, well-documented data, information, and analysis in ODOE’s biennial energy reports. Contributions by OCCRI staff to expansion and regular updating of the Climate Toolbox, a robust, user-friendly web-based platform designed for and used by resource managers, agricultural producers, and communities, similarly aim to address ODOE’s greatest needs for scientific and research support related to climate change and its effects.

Furthermore, OCCRI and ODOE are working together to facilitate undergraduate and graduate research experiences that provide practical training for students, increase ODOE’s capacity, and contribute to development of a diverse workforce. OCCRI and ODOE also work together to support the Oregon Global Warming Commission’s development of strategies for climate-change preparedness and mitigation. Regular interaction with ODOE staff contributes to OCCRI’s identification of priorities for serving integrated, accessible climate-change information to the public.

ODOE, OCCRI, and OSU share a commitment to stakeholder engagement in support of the resilience of Tribes and local communities throughout Oregon. Moreover, ODOE’s attentiveness to equity aligns with the social-justice values of OCCRI and Oregon State University, and with

the state's recognition that climate equity is essential for ensuring climate adaptation in underserved, frontline rural and urban communities.

Social science indicates that co-production of usable knowledge by researchers and practitioners, such as those in state agencies, is more likely to be used than knowledge produced by researchers alone. Such co-production also is more likely to build the adaptive capacity of communities and stakeholder groups, especially those that may be affected disproportionately by climate change, than working in isolation. OCCRI is grateful for its ongoing, fruitful collaborations with ODOE, which increase our ability to respond to the needs of the agency and of all Oregonians.

Please let me know if you would like additional information. Thank you again.

Sincerely,

Erica Fleishman

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