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Joint Subcommittee on Natural Resources

Testimony in support of HB 3630

Submitted by Laura Tabor, Climate Action Director

Chairs Dembrow and Pham and Subcommittee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 3630.

The Nature Conservancy in Oregon (TNC) is a science-based, non-partisan organization working in communities around the state to manage lands and waters in varied ecosystems. TNC partners with tribes, ranchers, farmers, fishers, timber, and environmental interests to tackle some of the most challenging conservation issues facing people and nature. Addressing the climate change crisis is a core component of TNC's work to create a world where people and nature can thrive.

The Climate Action Package (HB 3630/3409) is critical for advancing climate and energy priorities that maintain Oregon's leadership in setting and delivering on ambitious, science-driven policy. Building our state's capacity to implement these policies and leverage federal funding is critical to bringing the benefits of Oregon's clean energy transition to all parts of the state.

HB 3630's State Energy Strategy section (formerly HB 2534) invests in proactive energy planning. Now that Oregon has set nation-leading targets, it's time to show we can also lead in implementation by developing a clear, actionable state energy strategy. Deciding how to make the best use of the many carbon-free energy technologies to build Oregon's clean energy economy is a complex task that deserves intentional study with significant community engagement, and we strongly support prioritizing this effort without delay. Bringing communities and thorough analysis together to set direction for Oregon's clean energy transition will smooth and therefore accelerate the deployment of clean energy infrastructure in the state, delivering real value to Oregonians, including rural, tribal, and other environmental justice communities.

Through the sections on Home Energy Programs, State Department of Energy Single Resource, and Program to Assist Environmental Justice Communities (formerly HB 3166 and SB 852), HB 3630 provides resources to leverage federal funding and implement new energy efficiency programs with the necessary structure and support systems to help Oregonians access the many energy efficiency funding sources available, with dedicated support for environmental justice communities. Experts anticipate we need to reduce energy waste by 40% nationally to decarbonize our economy; HB 3630 will move Oregon in this direction while saving people money and creating more resiliency in the face of extreme weather.

We strongly urge your support of HB 3630 and moving this bill forward.