

Emerson Levy
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
House District 53



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Testimony in Support of HCR 25

March 9, 2023

Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, and Members of the House Committee on Rules:

For the record, my name is Emerson Levy, and I am the State Representative for House District 53, in Central Oregon. I am testifying in support of HCR 25, which commemorates the 75th anniversary of Oregon Tech's founding.

I recently visited Oregon Tech's residential campus in Klamath Falls. As Vice Chair of the House Climate, Energy, and Environment Committee, I enjoyed learning about all of the ways that Oregon Tech has prioritized sustainability and renewable energy from the very beginning. The university moved to its current location in the 1960s specifically due to the availability of natural geothermal energy. The entire campus is heated by water that comes out of the ground at approximately 198 degrees.

This commitment to sustainability and the use of geothermal energy saves the institution \$1.4 million a year in utility costs. However, this 60-year-old system is in dire need of critical life-safety and other upgrades. This unique state asset needs to be preserved, and I hope that you will all support Oregon Tech's request for emergency renovations to their system this session. I live in Bend, so I know how cold central Oregon can be – Klamath Falls is below freezing 7 months out of the year. A lack of heat and hot water would be devastating for the campus and community.

Oregon Tech, given its many decades of expertise around renewable energy, is also home to the Oregon Renewable Energy Center, a state program. OREC is an applied research center created by the Oregon State Legislature, which speeds the integration and optimization of renewable energy resources with current power generation systems, and accelerates clean energy technologies in collaboration with industry partners.

Thank you for celebrating 75 years of Oregon's polytechnic university, a leader in renewable energy, by holding this public hearing.