the
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center

March 3rd, 2023

Representative Pam Marsh, Chair
House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE, H-490
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Chair Marsh and Members of the Committee,

My name is Neil Baunsgard and I am the Climate Policy Manager at the Environmental Center based in Central Oregon. I am voicing our strong support for HB 3152.

In an ever-changing energy landscape, it is essential that we stay nimble and continue to make sure that our state's policies and programs are in line with advancing our climate goals. We have come a long way from old and expensive electric heating equipment and more and more homeowners and policies are recognizing a shift to relying less on natural gas for health, cost, and climate reasons.

I wanted to share a story that I have seen play out here in Central Oregon. Not only are line extension allowances placing a cost on existing customers, but they also can inadvertently lock in new construction by adding undesired gas appliances to their homes. Because line extensions are often built out in the development of a property, we have community members that are building new homes, and because the developer has already claimed the line extension allowance while preparing the sites, they are required to add natural gas to their homes even though they are trying to build efficient, resilient an all electric home

We should be closely examining any projects to expand fossil fuel infrastructure, and this bill allows the OPUC to do that in addition to considering climate and protecting the future ratepayers that shouldn't be burdened with the cost of stranded fossil fuel infrastructure.

In conclusion, I urge you to support HB 3152. It is a subtle but necessary step in fighting climate change while making energy bills more fair , this bill will help to create a more sustainable future for all of us.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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