



HB 3179A helps to streamline the process of siting renewable projects in Oregon, making it easier for Oregon to realize the economic development benefits of renewable development, and not see those projects move to other states.

Oregon is at an important moment where state and federal policies and incentives are aligned to spur clean energy economic growth. However, Oregon is missing out on opportunities – building renewable projects in Oregon is riskier, more expensive and takes longer. Out of **seven states** one OSSIA member works in, Oregon is the most risky.

Here is a comparison of permitting timelines between Oregon and Idaho:

	<b>Idaho</b>	<b>Oregon</b>
<b>Small projects</b>	\$5-\$30K, less than six months	\$50-\$100K, 3 mo – 1 year
<b>Large projects</b>	\$10-\$30K, 6 mo -1 year	\$500K-\$1 M, 1-2 years

If Oregon’s renewable permitting system is not fixed, Oregon will essentially be exporting our climate goals to other states.

While there are many ways to improve our permitting system, HB 3179 takes immediate steps to address this critical problem.

HB 3179A does two things:

1. Allows more projects to be approved at the county level, instead of at the state level
2. Require that the Oregon Department of Transportation and counties fairly consider renewable projects when reviewing siting requests in the right-of-way

Allowing counties to approve larger projects:

In 2019 the Legislature passed a bill to increase the size of projects that can be approved at the county level, instead of at the state level, through the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC). Counties have had great success since then in permitting larger projects. Getting projects approved at the county level is often preferable – the state process takes longer, is more costly, and does not have the same level of local control. The county process provides greater opportunity for local participation in siting decision-making.

Because counties have been successful, it makes sense to increase the size of projects counties can approve. HB 3179A increases the sizes of projects that counties can approve but *keeps in place all existing requirements regarding land-use and wildlife*. In addition, any project can be permitted through the state – that option remains in place.



This bill seeks to help the “invisible” projects: projects that were considered by developers, but then abandoned when the EFSC cost and timeline was considered. No analysis can be conducted to determine how many “invisible” projects Oregon lost out on.

The Oregon Department of Energy has documented several projects that have been approved faster at a county level than would most likely have been approved at EFSC, given historical permit approval times. In addition, more MW of solar have been approved at the county level and are operational than have been approved at EFSC. These figures speak volumes regarding ease of permitting at the county level versus the state level.

Requiring ODOT and counties to treat renewables the same as utilities:

Current law allows ODOT and counties to permit utilities to use the right-of-way for their equipment, but the definition of utility facility is too narrow. Renewable facilities have run into difficulties with requests to place transmission lines in the right-of-way.

HB 3179A asks that ODOT and counties “not discriminate against or favor a renewable energy facility” to give renewables a fair review.