

Submitter: Devon Lawson-McCourt
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment
Measure: SB1581

To the Honorable Members of the Senate Committee On Energy and Environment,

I am writing to express my unwavering support for Senate Bill 1581, a legislative proposal that not only addresses a critical aspect of our ongoing climate crisis but also aligns with our shared socialist values of collective action, transparency, and accountability. This bill, which requires any investor-owned utility that sells more than two million megawatt hours of electricity in a calendar year to report its activities related to participating in a regional energy market, is a step in the right direction towards a more equitable, sustainable, and democratically managed energy system.

First and foremost, the urgency of the climate crisis cannot be overstated. The move towards regional energy markets is essential in our transition to renewable energy sources, reducing our reliance on fossil fuels, and mitigating the effects of climate change. By facilitating the sharing of resources across a wider geographic area, regional energy markets can enhance the reliability and affordability of clean energy, thereby accelerating our progress towards a sustainable future. SB 1581 ensures that the significant players in our energy system are actively engaging in this crucial endeavor.

Moreover, this bill embodies the principle of transparency in the operations of entities that have a profound impact on our community's well-being. Investor-owned utilities, by virtue of their critical role in providing an essential public service, must be held to a higher standard of accountability. By requiring these utilities to report on their efforts to participate in regional energy markets, SB 1581 ensures that the public, policymakers, and stakeholders have access to vital information. This transparency is necessary for informed decision-making, enabling us to collectively steer our energy policies in a direction that benefits all, not just a privileged few.

Additionally, SB 1581 fosters a sense of collective responsibility and action. The challenges posed by climate change and the transition to renewable energy cannot be solved by individual actors working in isolation. Regional energy markets represent a collective approach to managing our energy resources, emphasizing cooperation and coordination over competition. This approach is inherently progressive, recognizing that our shared resources must be managed in a way that serves the common good, rather than the interests of a select few.

Lastly, this bill is an important step towards democratizing our energy system. By promoting participation in regional energy markets and mandating transparency, we

are moving closer to a system where energy production and distribution are governed by the principles of equity and sustainability. This democratization is essential for creating an energy system that is not only efficient and sustainable but also fair and just.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 1581 is more than just a regulatory requirement; it is a manifestation of our collective aspiration for a better world. It aligns with our progressive ideals of transparency, accountability, collective action, and the democratization of essential services. I urge you to support this bill, not only as a necessary response to the technical challenges of our time but as a moral imperative towards building a more equitable, sustainable, and just Oregon.

Sincerely,
Devon Lawson-McCourt