

TO: House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment

RE: Support of HB 2656

DATE: February 12th, 2025

Dear Members of the Committee,

My name is Dulasi Tennakoon, a senior undergraduate majoring in Politics, Policy, Law and Ethics in Willamette University, and I am writing to express my strong **support** for House Bill 2656. As an undergraduate student residing in Oregon, I am deeply concerned about climate change and the urgent need to transition to renewable energy. Placing a cap on the amount of solar energy that can be connected to the grid has several negative consequences: A cap limits the number of people and businesses that can participate in solar net metering programs. This restricts the potential for clean, renewable energy to replace fossil fuels, which are a major contributor to climate change. It can **disproportionately affect certain communities**, especially those with higher solar potential but fewer resources. It creates barriers to participation, making it harder for some residents to take advantage of solar energy even when they are willing to invest in it. More importantly, we are also limiting the opportunity to innovate and improve solar technology.

There's both short and long term benefits of passing the bill.

The most obvious result, by removing the cap, more Oregonians will have the opportunity to install solar systems, allowing them to generate their own clean energy and reduce their reliance on fossil fuels. More demand for solar energy means more jobs in the solar industry, installation, maintenance, and manufacturing. This can **boost local economies** and create new opportunities for Oregon residents, particularly in green jobs. With fewer restrictions, net metering systems can help individuals and businesses reduce their electricity bills by offsetting their energy consumption with solar power. The expansion of these systems will encourage broader participation, making solar **more accessible and affordable**. Long-term benefits include a significant reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, promotion of energy independence, and a contribution to a cleaner, healthier future.

Please hear the voices of the youth! We deserve a future that's clean and sustainable.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Dulasi Tennakoon

Student, Oregon Resident