

Submitter: Jeanne Chouard

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2656

Here in Jackson County, we are on the front lines of the Climate Emergency. In 2020, we lost over 3,000 homes and businesses to the Almeda Fire on Labor Day. This was devastating to the communities of Talent and Phoenix. Businesses were closed and thousands of our residents instantly became homeless. The smoke from this fire scared away the tourists that our economy depends on in adjacent communities. The fire started as a grass fire in Ashland and spread rapidly due to Santa Ana type winds--which we never experienced prior to climate change. Our summers have become longer, hotter and drier. In the past, grass fires could be easily contained. But the changing climate has put even urban areas not adjacent to forests at risk of out of control climate fires like the Almeda fire.

This is why here in Oregon we must enable Oregonians to do everything they can to mitigate the climate crisis emergency. It's a fact that our dependence on fossil fuels is responsible for the climate crisis. All Oregonians should be able to invest in renewable energy and be able to sell their generated power back to their utility company without restrictions.

This bill is good for Oregon families and businesses. Especially in Southern and Eastern Oregon, there is great potential for more solar and wind energy. Let's make it possible for as many as possible Oregonians to participate in the Renewable Energy revolution.