



February 21, 2025

To: Senator Aaron Woods, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Representative David Gomber, Co-Chair, Joint Committee on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development

From: Emily Griffith, Oregon Policy Manager, Renewable Northwest

Re: Support for HB 5034: Oregon Public Utility Commission Budget

Co-chair Woods, Co-chair Gomberg, and members of the committee;

Renewable Northwest (“RNW”) is a regional, non-profit renewable energy advocacy organization based here in Oregon, dedicated to decarbonizing the region by accelerating the transition to renewable electricity. Our members include renewable energy developers and businesses, environmental organizations, and consumer groups. **Renewable Northwest is pleased to support HB 5034 which puts forward the budget of the Oregon Public Utility Commission for the next biennium.**

The Oregon Public Utility Commission (“PUC”) is central to Oregon’s energy future and moving to a decarbonized electricity grid. As Oregon implements its ambitious energy policies, responds to emerging new technology, and grapples with new issues - such as wildfire mitigation - the PUC is at the center of these discussions, especially as we see greater engagement in the regulated utility space by organizations and citizens. The PUC’s requested modest increase in budget will allow it to respond to these important challenges by bringing on more employees and resources to scrutinize utility filings and open relevant dockets to grapple with the tough questions facing the electric utility sector.

The PUC plays an important role in ensuring Oregonians are served with reliable, safe, and affordable electricity. As Oregon faces new demands and strains on its electricity system - from implementing new legislative mandates to responding to an unprecedented projected increase in demand and an aging transmission grid - the PUC is tasked with answering these challenges in the public’s interest. As a public agency, the PUC must oversee and open various processes (dockets) to ensure parties are heard and new policies are implemented in a manner that aligns with legislative intent. This translates to many different resource-intensive proceedings, such as rulemakings, investigations, workshops, and contested case proceedings to rule on legal and factual issues.

The PUC's proposed budget reflects this work. POP 101, which increases the revenue fee cap it can impose on utilities, would allow PUC's continued operations under increasing costs. This enables the PUC's work in the other areas outlined in the POPs. RNW especially supports POP 102 for records management, POP 104 on utility wildfire mitigation auditing, POP 105 to increase professional services in support of the PUC's expanding policy directives, and POP 106 to support more targeted outreach by the PUC.

Renewable NW engages consistently at the PUC and appreciates the important work that the Commission and its Staff perform in the public interest. The significance of this work cannot be overstated. As such, **RNW fully supports the PUC's budget request as submitted in HB 5034.**



Emily Griffith
Oregon Policy Manager
Renewable Northwest