



February 24, 2025

Chair Lively
House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Support for HB 3628

Chair Lively and Members of the Committee,

Oregon must expand and modernize our transmission system to enhance reliability, support communities, and accelerate our clean energy transition. A Transmission Authority focused exclusively on this task will be instrumental in moving us forward. Climate Solutions strongly supports HB 3628. Climate Solutions is a clean energy nonprofit organization working to accelerate solutions to the climate crisis. The Northwest has emerged as a hub of climate action, and Climate Solutions is at the center of the movement as a catalyst and advocate.

The Pacific Northwest needs at least 56% more transmission to meet our energy goals. Electricity demand is expected to increase by 30% in the next ten years. Oregon has one of the longest backlogs in the country of projects waiting to connect to the transmission grid, with 182 GW of renewable energy in the queue. Without significantly expanding transmission capacity, these projects will not be connected, and our clean energy transition will be stymied.

Among the powers HB 3628 confers to a Transmission Authority is the ability to engage in transmission planning that enhances grid reliability. With the region's electricity load projected to increase by thousands of megawatts, we need to do planning at a statewide and regional level. Large energy use facilities such as data centers must be sited in areas with sufficient transmission and access to clean energy resources. Additionally, transmission infrastructure must accommodate the renewable energy resources sitting in the interconnection queue. A Transmission Authority can engage in these planning and coordinating activities.

Transmission projects face unique challenges in permitting and financing. A Transmission Authority with bonding authority can help invest early in transmission based on thorough studies determining where it is most needed. Public funding would also unlock lower financing rates, ultimately keeping costs lower for ratepayers. The Transmission Authority could then form collaborative public/private partnerships to see projects through to fruition.

The time has come for a state Transmission Authority capable of planning, coordinating, and financing crucial projects to expand our transmission infrastructure.

For all these reasons, we urge your support for HB 3628.

Sincerely,

Joshua Basofin

Joshua Basofin
Clean Energy Program Director
Climate Solutions