

Support for HB3247

Chair Lively, Vice-Chairs Levy and Gamba, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Ed Diehl, and I am the State Representative for House District 17, which spans East Salem through the majestic Santiam Canyon. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of House Bill 3247.

This bill ensures that Oregon maintains a **stable, reliable, and dispatchable power supply** which is essential for a productive and prosperous society. This bill requires that before an electric power generating facility providing **reliable, dispatchable electricity** is retired, an electric company must first secure a **replacement source of equally reliable electricity**. By ‘dispatchable’, I mean a power source that can ramp up and down based upon energy demand. This safeguard is essential to ensuring a **secure energy future** for Oregon.

[Why This Bill Matters](#)

At its core, HB 3247 is about **protecting the reliability of Oregon’s power grid**. The shift to renewable energy is important, but we must acknowledge that wind and solar power **are intermittent**—they do not generate electricity when the wind isn’t blowing or the sun isn’t shining. **Reliable power is essential**, and for Oregon, our most reliable in-state source of dispatchable electricity is **hydroelectric power**.

If we eliminate these **proven, stable sources** without securing viable replacements, we risk increased **grid instability, power shortages, and price volatility**—problems that have already surfaced in other regions that moved too quickly away from dispatchable power sources.

Lessons from Germany

Germany serves as a cautionary tale. The country's decision to **phase out nuclear and fossil-fuel-based power plants** in favor of wind and solar has led to **significant grid strain**, increased reliance on imported natural gas, and soaring electricity costs. While the transition was well-intended, the failure to maintain adequate **dispatchable backup power** has resulted in instability, higher costs, and a loss of energy independence. Oregon must learn from this mistake and ensure that we **preserve reliable energy sources** even as we expand renewable capacity.

Safeguarding Oregon's Energy Future

This bill acts as a **commonsense safeguard** against potential disruptions to Oregon's power grid by ensuring that **dispatchable energy sources are replaced before being retired**. This is crucial not just for **residential consumers** but also for **industries that depend on an uninterrupted power supply** to remain productive and competitive.

Moreover, **economic growth depends on energy stability**. A predictable, reliable power grid **attracts and retains businesses**, fosters innovation, and ensures that Oregon remains competitive in an increasingly energy-dependent economy. Without **adequate dispatchable power**, our state risks **higher energy costs, business uncertainty, and economic stagnation**.

Preventing Overreliance on Imported Power

Another key consideration is **keeping energy production in Oregon**. We are already **heavily dependent on out-of-state electricity imports**, and further reducing in-state dispatchable capacity will **exacerbate this problem**. Relying on imported electricity introduces additional risks, including **transmission losses, grid congestion, and fluctuating**

regulatory standards, all of which could lead to **higher costs and unreliable supply**.

Why would we eliminate clean, renewable hydroelectric power, only to replace it with imported electricity generated by fossil fuels in another state? That makes no sense from an environmental, economic, or energy security standpoint.

A Proactive and Balanced Approach

Opponents of this bill may argue that Oregon's current energy supply is stable, and they may be right—for now. But **projected energy demands are growing**, and failing to plan ahead will put us in the same difficult position that other states and countries now face. HB 3247 is a **proactive measure** that ensures **Oregon does not face an energy crisis down the road**.

This legislation is not about resisting change—it is about **managing change responsibly**. By requiring a **replacement source of reliable electricity before retiring dispatchable generation**, we can move toward a more sustainable energy future **without jeopardizing reliability, affordability, and economic stability**.

Conclusion

House Bill 3247 is a **commonsense solution** that protects Oregon's energy security. By ensuring that we maintain a **stable and dispatchable power supply**, we safeguard **grid reliability, economic prosperity, and energy independence**.

For these reasons, I urge you to **vote YES on HB 3247** to secure a balanced, sustainable, and reliable energy future for Oregon.

Thank you for your time and consideration.
