



To House Committee on Climate, Energy and the Environment Opposition to HB 3247 – Replacement of Dispatchable Generation

March 7, 2025

Chair Lively, Vice-chairs Gamba and Levy, and members of the committee,

My name is Dr. Pat DeLaquil. I am an energy system modeler and climate policy analyst, and I organize with MCAT (Mobilizing Climate Action Together), a community of volunteers working on advancing a healthy climate and a green economy for future generations. I am submitting this testimony, in opposition to HB 3247, on behalf of the MCAT Clean Energy Team.

This bill would require an electric company to first acquire a replacement resource of reliable or dispatchable electricity prior to retiring an electric power generating facility that provides reliable or dispatchable electricity.

Presumably, this bill is intended to help maintain the reliability of our electricity supply network. However, this bill's focus on plant-by-plant replacement is based in an incorrect premise regarding the foundation of reliability in our interconnected electricity network. While individual plants contribute to reliability, what we want as a society is *system reliability*, which is a complicated product of the availability of all supply, storage and demand response measures on the grid.

Another fact that bill's proponents seemingly fail to recognize is that solar and wind are currently the lowest cost sources of new large-scale electricity generation in the US and around the world. This is fortunate for us, as our state continues its journey to a clean energy future, because as we expand our supply to meet the growing demand from data centers and vehicle electrification, we are adding the lowest cost new capacity to meet that demand. Because our current share of wind and solar are so low, their variable output will be easily managed with our current fleet of gas-fired power plants. In fact, PGE projected in their first Clean Electricity Plan that they plan to continue operating their existing gas plants for the next 20 years but gradually shift them to exporting energy out of state.

Also, over the past few decades, the electricity network has slowly but steadily shifted from a rigid centralized generation model to one that has increasing amounts of distributed generation and storage throughout the system, as well as greater access to regional resources. Emerging technologies, such as bidirectional EV charging, smart appliances, home solar batteries, community solar, and virtual power plants, along with micro-grid techniques can provide not just added reliability, but resilience in the face of natural disasters.

Our electric utilities are already grappling with these technical issues as part of the regular Integrated Resource and Clean Electricity Planning processes at the Public Utilities Commission. HB 3247 would force an arbitrary constraint on our utilities' ability to develop the comprehensive and potentially transformative solutions that we need to ensure resource adequacy and resilience in our electricity supply system. In fact, HB 3247 would continue the fragmented, utility-by-utility, site-by-site, planning process which burdens our grid and communities today. Regional and state inter-utility planning, such as that envisioned in Representative Gamba's HB 3628, is a more comprehensive and potentially



transformative solution to the resource adequacy challenges which the bill before you purports to address.

Finally, nuclear is not alone in the ability to provide baseload electrical power. Both enhanced geothermal systems (EGS) and small modular nuclear reactors have the potential to provide very carbon-free baseload power, and enhanced geothermal has recently achieved significant improvements in drilling technology what has reduced investment costs to close to \$6000/kW, which is dramatically lower than current advanced nuclear technologies.

I urge you to oppose HB 3247. The bill seeks to solve a problem that doesn't currently exist using a solution that ignores the changing nature of our electric network.

Mobilizing Climate Action Clean Energy Team

Pat DeLaquil, John Perona, Michael Mitton, Amanda Duncan, Brett Baylor, Dan Frye, Dave Peticolas, Debby Garman, Robin Denberg, Ed Averill, Genevieve Hall, Helena Birecki, Thor Hinckley