



March 10, 2025

House Committee on Climate, Energy and the Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

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

On behalf of Oregon Environmental Council and Climate Solutions, we write in support of House Bill 3609 (HB 3609) which would require electric companies to develop, consider and plan for, the incorporation of distributed power plants into their resource mix.

Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization which works to advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations. Climate Solutions seeks to accelerate clean energy solutions to the climate crisis with a focus on increasing social equity and affordability.

According to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, electricity demand in Oregon and the region is projected to grow rapidly for the foreseeable future. Distributed power plants (DPP) are a proven way to leverage new technologies such as rooftop solar electricity generation, smart inverters, battery storage and smart thermostats to respond to that increased demand. In fact, the US Department of Energy (DOE) estimates that DPPs can reduce peak load on US energy grids by 10 to 20 percent. By adding new diversified electricity resources to Oregon's grid, DPPs can also deliver benefits such as voltage modulation, backup power during outages, and greenhouse gas emission reductions. By harnessing multiple generating resources and more flexible storage and demand response, DPPs may also save customers money on their utility bills.

In return for the services these privately procured resources provide to the grid, solar electric system owners will earn fair compensation for the use of their investment.

Moreover, DPPs can also spur much-needed economic development, private investment, innovation and technology development, as well as creating high-paying jobs.

Importantly, DPPs are estimated to cost 40–60% less than traditional methods of providing the same services to the utility grid. The Department of Energy projects that rapidly deploying DPPs by 2030 could save American ratepayers up to \$35 billion.

However, a crucial barrier identified by DOE is that DPPs aren't widely available to consumers. This is due to that fact that many voluntary utility programs are unable to move beyond the "pilot" stage, restricting their ability to scale to the levels needed to meet our increasing energy demands. Policy initiatives, such as House Bill 3609, are thus critical to bringing stakeholders and utilities to the table, attracting producers and customers, and ensuring program success. Now is the time to make DPPs available to all Oregonians by setting up a statewide DPP program.

Thank you for considering OEC and Climate Solutions' perspectives regarding HB 3609. We urge your Do Pass recommendation to move the bill to the House floor for a vote and allow DPPs to provide more energy choices for Oregon consumers.

Sincerely,



Jay Ward
Interim Director of Programs
Oregon Environmental Council



Joshua Basofin
Clean Energy Program Director
Climate Solutions