

Submitter: Diane Hodiak
On Behalf Of: 350Deschutes
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3609

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

March 11, 2025

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

Thank you Mr. Chair and members of the committee for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of climate organizations – 350 Deschutes, 350PDX, Mobilizing Climate Action Together (MCAT), and Southern Oregon Climate Action Network (SOCAN) – in support of HB 3609. The bill provides a bold, but achievable, vision for Oregon’s energy future and gives Oregon another tool in its toolbox to meet its clean energy standards. We will need every tool to address the need to reduce carbon emissions to forestall the worst effects of climate change.

Distributed Power Plants or DPPs are a proven way to reduce the costs of operating utility grids. They save customers money and provide grid benefits at this time of rapidly growing energy demand. DPPs work by bringing together rooftop solar and battery systems with other technologies such as smart thermostats, to provide electricity where and when it’s needed most. This helps prevent power outages, reduce the need to operate expensive and polluting “peaker” power plants, and lowers utility costs for everyone. In fact, the US Department of Energy estimates that DPPs can reduce peak load on US energy grids by 10 to 20 percent.

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

DPPs also spur much-needed economic development, private investment, innovation and technology development, as well as creating high-paying jobs. DPPs are an important tool to diversify our energy economy.

Crucially, 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 ratepayers up to \$35 billion.

However, the DOE identifies that the main thing holding DPPs back is that they aren't widely available to consumers yet because voluntary utility programs are stuck at the "pilot" stage, restricting their ability to scale to levels needed to meet growing energy demands. Policy initiatives, such as House Bill 3609, are thus critical to bringing stakeholders and utilities to the table, attracting customers, and ensuring program success. Now is the time to make DPPs available to all Oregonians by setting up a DPP statewide program.

Thank you for your time and attention to this important issue. Please give a Do Pass recommendation on HB 3609 to move the bill to the House floor for a vote and allow DPPs to lower electric bills and to provide more energy choices for Oregon consumers.

Thank you
Diane Hodiak
Executive Director