

March 25, 2025

House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment  
Oregon Legislature

RE: Support for HB 3422

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

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is the state's most inclusive agriculture organization, proudly representing over 6,500 family farms and ranches that produce more than 220 agricultural commodities. From hops and hazelnuts to cattle, cranberries, and timber with operations spanning from just a few acres to thousands, our members utilize all farming methods including organic, conventional, regenerative, biotech, and even no-tech. My name is Ryan Krabill and, on behalf of OFB, I appreciate the opportunity to submit this testimony in support of HB 3422.

This bill strengthens the standards for the Energy Facility Siting Council (EFSC) when considering exceptions to Oregon's statewide land use planning goals, pursuing a more balanced approach to energy development that protects our irreplaceable farmland.

**Balancing Renewable Energy and Agricultural Viability**

Oregon's farmers are the best stewards of their land and understand what is necessary to maintain their operations and sustain their livelihoods. They face stiff headwinds in the form of increasing economic pressures, regulatory burdens, and production costs unique to our state. As a result, some are considering solar energy development as a means to diversify their income and keep their farms financially viable.

At the same time, Oregon's farmland is a finite and invaluable resource—among the most productive in the world. It is essential that energy development does not come at the expense of our state's long-term agricultural sustainability. Large-scale solar projects can permanently remove farmland from production, and once lost, that land is rarely reclaimed for farming.

HB 3422 ensures that solar projects are evaluated carefully within Oregon's existing land use framework, striking a reasonable and necessary balance between renewable energy

opportunities and agricultural land conservation. The bill introduces clearer, stronger criteria for exceptions to statewide planning goals, ensuring that energy facilities are sited responsibly, with alternative locations considered, adverse impacts mitigated, and compatibility with surrounding agricultural uses maintained.

**Bridging a Regulatory Imbalance**

Oregon must protect farmland for its highest and best use—food and fiber production—while also providing landowners the flexibility to explore additional revenue sources. However, an imbalance in the regulatory framework has made it easier to convert farmland for energy projects than to develop it for new agricultural uses or infrastructure.

HB 3422 is a reasonable acknowledgement of this imbalance by ensuring that EFSC's decision-making process fully considers the long-term viability of Oregon's agricultural lands. Farmers should have the option to integrate solar energy into their operations, but they should not be placed in a position where short-term economic necessity leads to the irreversible loss of farmland. It is our hope that the state's current regulatory environment can be rebalanced more appropriately to incentivize the responsible production of agricultural commodities for our collective benefit. In the meantime, we support farmers' ability to adopt revenue diversification mechanisms that allow them to keep agricultural land in agricultural production using a balanced approach that does not sacrifice long-term potential.

**Conclusion**

Oregon's agricultural land is a strategic, long-term asset, critical to our state's economy, food security, and rural communities. HB 3422 ensures that energy development decisions reflect the full impact on Oregon's farmers and ranchers, preserving the state's agricultural legacy while allowing for measured and thoughtful renewable energy expansion.

We urge your support for HB 3422 and appreciate your commitment to ensuring that Oregon's energy future and agricultural economy can thrive together.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



Ryan J. Krabill  
Oregon Farm Bureau