



March 27, 2025

House Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Re: Support for HB 3792

Dear Chair Sosa, Vice-Chairs Chaichi and Osborne, and Members of the Committee,

Climate Solutions is a regional non-profit working to accelerate clean energy solutions to the climate crisis. **We support HB 3792 as one of the important tools that the legislature can use this year to protect utility customers and support energy affordability.**

Many of us are experiencing the challenge of energy affordability. Investor Owned Utilities (IOUs) which provide energy to most Oregonians have raised rates by 50% over the last couple of years. The legislature is rising to meet this challenge this year with a suite of energy affordability solutions. Oregonians need the legislature to reach for every tool in the toolbox to address rising costs and ensure energy security for Oregon families. HB 3792 is just one of those tools, and is a compliment to the other efforts being undertaken by the legislature this year, including Transparency in Rates (SB 88), One Stop Shop 2.0 (HB 3081), the FAIR Act (HB 3179), and the POWER Act (HB 3546).

PGE and Pacific Power customers have seen nearly a 50% rise in their energy bills since 2021. In 2024 alone, nearly 58,000 households were disconnected from power, including almost 10,000 low-income households already enrolled in bill discount programs. These disconnections are not just numbers; they represent families forced to choose between keeping the lights on and meeting other basic needs.

The Oregon Energy Assistance Program (OEAP) is a vital tool to help households avoid disconnection by paying down past-due utility debt. But the need has far outpaced the program's current funding. With a budget that has remained stagnant while utility costs soar, OEAP today reaches fewer than one in five households that qualify and need assistance.

HB 3792 will double OEAP's funding from \$20 million to \$40 million annually — a small increase on utility bills of less than \$1.50 per month per household — that will make a big difference in preventing power shutoffs and ensuring energy security for Oregon families. Importantly, this

state funding complements federal assistance and utility discount programs to provide a more holistic solution to energy unaffordability.

We urge you to support HB 3792 to help keep more Oregonians connected to essential power services. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Claire Prihoda
Buildings Policy Manager
Climate Solutions