

Submitter: Laurie Brooks

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3546

Members of the Committee,

I'm Laurie Brooks from Tigard in State Senate District 13 (RIP, Senator Woods). I am here today to ask that you support the POWER Act.

As your constituent, I'm urging you to support HB 3546: Protecting Oregonians With Energy Responsibility (POWER) Act to ensure that families and small businesses do not have to continue subsidizing the energy costs for data centers. The POWER Act aims to address one of the root causes of unaffordable electricity bills, protecting Oregon families from carrying the energy costs of the wealthy tech industry.

I'm worried about skyrocketing energy prices, as my energy bills have increased significantly over the last few years. Knowing that many in our state are struggling to afford basic necessities and realizing that we have been helping cover the energy bills for data centers is upsetting and deeply unfair. HB 3546 would ensure that Oregon residential utility customers are no longer paying for any utility investments that are only benefiting large energy users like data centers.

These large energy users need to pay their fair share. With data center demand growing exponentially, we need better guardrails to protect Oregonians from the rising energy costs data centers bring with them. Why should we be expected to subsidize data centers or other large energy users who are in many cases are reaping record profits and are often not even based in our state but who built centers here only to take advantage of our relatively cheaper energy rates? Moreover, these data centers employ few if any workers, so they don't even contribute to our economic wellbeing over the long term. HB 3546 would create a new customer category for data centers and similar businesses so they can be held accountable by regulators and Oregon families can be released from this unfair arrangement.

We have seen other states struggle to meet energy needs as data centers have boomed, and this really concerns me. Oregon needs to protect our energy systems and affordability. HB 3546 would require data centers to commit to making utility investments worth it so our utilities can keep our electricity flowing in a time where we are increasing our reliance on green energy, as well as support businesses coming to Oregon.

The POWER Act protects our energy bills, holds data centers accountable, and makes our entire utility system stronger. Please vote yes on HB 3546.

Laurie Brooks