



Senate Committee on Energy and Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

May 5, 2025

Chair Jama, Vice-chair Bonham and members of the committee,

The Oregon Solar + Storage Industries Association (OSSIA) is a trade association founded in 1981 to promote clean, renewable, solar technologies. OSSIA members include businesses, non-profit groups, and other solar and storage industry stakeholders. We provide a unified voice of the solar industry and focus exclusively on the solar and storage value chains; from workforce development to permitting, advocacy, policy, and regulation for manufacturing, residential, commercial, community, and utility scale solar and storage projects on the local, state, and regional level.

OSSIA urges this committee to pass SB 88, to ensure a level playing field and to treat ratepayers fairly. Oregon's investor-owned utilities are monopolies, which leaves very little room for competition in the energy space. However, renewable developers are one small way in which utilities face competition for building, owning and operating renewable projects. It is still a huge challenge to compete with large investor-owned monopolies, but the competition creates savings for ratepayers. SB 88 would help to level the playing field.

Investor-owned utilities have no incentive to help their competitors and have every incentive to stall private renewable development. When OSSIA works at the Legislature to increase competition and fairness for private renewable developers, the utilities outgun us with a minimum of three lobbyists per utility to our one. Ratepayers are unwittingly paying for lobbyists to work against their own interests for clean energy at lower costs.

In addition, it is frustrating to watch these utilities use ratepayer dollars to advertise their support of clean energy. OSSIA feels that ratepayers are paying for advertising which is not telling the whole truth, since the utilities time and again delay clean energy projects from being connected to the grid. There are community solar projects that have waited over a year to connect to the grid and provide clean energy discounts to ratepayers. When utilities have an opportunity to advertise for the benefit of their customers – such as advertising in bill mailers for the community solar program - they barely make an effort. In the last five years PGE has only notified customers twice about community solar and PacifiCorp has only notified customers once about the program.

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While it is everyone's right to advertise, ratepayers should not be paying for advertising that doesn't benefit them, especially for a monopoly utility that does not need to advertise its services to gain additional customers.

OSSIA urges this committee to pass SB 88 to protect ratepayers and level the playing field for utility competition.

Sincerely,

Angela Crowley-Koch
Executive Director