



www.RogueClimate.org || PO Box 1980, Phoenix, OR 97535 || 541-301-9204

Coos Bay Office: 243 S. 2nd St. Coos Bay, OR 97420 || 541- 816-0758

Re: Rogue Climate Testimony regarding HB 3546

Dear Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair Brock Smith and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 3546: Relating to large energy use facilities; declaring an emergency.

Rogue Climate serves and works alongside Southern Oregon and South Coast communities most impacted by climate change, including low-income, rural, youth, and communities of color, by organizing for clean energy, sustainable jobs, and a healthy environment. We do so through leadership development, political education, and campaigns for policies that benefit our communities.

Oregon households are hitting their limit with utility costs, as evidenced by the state's largest for-profit utilities raising residential billing rates by nearly 50% since 2021 and our two largest electric utilities disconnecting a record-breaking nearly 58,000 households last year. A [2024 ACEEE study](#) found that households that identify as low-income, African American, Latinx, or Native are more likely to be energy burdened and face a higher energy burden than the average household. Households in rural communities are also more likely to be energy burdened, with [30-39% of households](#) in Jackson and Coos county facing severe energy burdens while also earning [less than \\$15,060 per year](#).

The Pacific Northwest has historically consumed around 22,000 average megawatts of electricity per year. The Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee now projects that electricity demand will surge, reaching between [31,000 and 44,000](#) average megawatts annually by 2046, a staggering increase of 40% to 100%. This is due in large part to Oregon's large and growing data center market. For perspective, a single 30 MW data center uses more electricity annually than all the homes in Ashland combined and a 50 MW facility consumes more power than every customer served by the Coos County Co-op. Oregon needs to protect our energy systems as well as affordability.

The Public Utility Commission and investor-owned utilities do not have all the tools they need to shield residential customers from grid infrastructure costs that big energy users will require going forward to build transmission and resources to serve them. The Protecting Oregonians With Energy Responsibility (POWER) Act (HB 3546) gives them the tools to be able to do that going forward by making for-profit utilities identify the costs that these large energy users are adding to the system—and make them pay their share. By creating a special category for these customers, regulators can protect Oregonians from covering the cost of these businesses. We are not asking utilities to subsidize other users, we just want residential bills to reflect the true



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cost of electric service. Consumer-owned utilities in Oregon are already making this shift to protect customers and we want to see investor-owned utilities take this step as well.

We urge you to support HB 3546 to protect Oregonians who are already struggling to tighten their budgets due to rising energy costs.

Sincerely,

Jess Grady-Benson, Organizing Director

Zöe Serrano, Legislative Coordinator