

Date: April 30 2025

To: Senate Committee on Energy and Environment

Subject: Support for HB 3546

Chair Sollman, Vice-Chair David Brock Smith, and members of the committee:

I am writing as a representative of Community Energy Project (CEP) in support of HB 3546: POWER Act. CEP serves people on the front lines of climate change including those who are low-income, people of color, immigrants, seniors and people with disabilities. We offer DIY education on energy savings and safety, weatherization and safety supplies, direct home repairs, and full energy retrofits, all at no cost to our participants.

Far too many Oregonians from all constituencies are struggling to pay their energy bills. Last year, nearly 70,000 Oregon households were disconnected from their utility services<sup>1</sup>. For reference, that's the same size as the 4th largest city in Oregon, all having their power shut off. In fact, from 2021-now, Oregon's largest for-profit utilities have raised their rates 50%+, while minimum wage has increased 9%. Meanwhile, one utility reported record profits in 2024<sup>2</sup>. This has left far too many families in dire financial situations, forcing them to shoulder the costs of utility business' interests and the costs of large energy users in their monthly bills.

The POWER Act (HB 3546) requires state regulators to create new policies to help protect utility customers from subsidizing data centers and cryptocurrency. It will also make for-profit utilities identify the costs that these large and unique energy users are adding to the system to make them pay their fair share. Large corporate customers would pay for their own needs, such as expensive infrastructure that is built only to serve them. It would require predictable minimum and maximum energy use and would charge them for breaking that agreement.

Currently, we need more assurances that after these new investments are made for data centers and crypto that these customers won't leave behind stranded assets, leaving other rate-payers to pay the cost. The POWER Act ensures that expensive utility investments are continually paid for by these entities and requires that they stay put for at least 10 years. This will add stability to the energy grid and protect jobs promised to often rural communities.

Creating this customer category for them ensures we can better know their true costs to the grid. This is important because we need data centers and cryptocurrency customers to pay their fair share. Their demand for energy is creating a greater need to invest in our electric grid but these costs are being unfairly subsidized by the average Oregonian. This bill will help state regulators appropriately assign these high costs to the customers causing the costs in the first place. We

---

<sup>1</sup> RO 12, Utility's quarterly disconnection reports

<sup>2</sup> Citizens Utility Board (CUB), 2024

urge your support of HB 3546 for a more reliable energy grid for both current and future Oregonians.

Thank you,  
Greer Klepacki  
Policy & Advocacy Manager  
Community Energy Project