



May 12, 2025

To: House Committee on Judiciary

From: Nicole Hughes, Executive Director, Renewable Northwest

Re: Opposition to SB 926A

Chair Kropf, Vice-Chairs Chotzen and Wallan, and Committee Members,

Renewable Northwest (RNW) is a regional nonprofit based in Oregon focused on renewable energy. Our members include clean energy developers, environmental organizations, and consumer advocates committed to advancing reliable, affordable, and sustainable power.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on SB 926A. We strongly oppose this proposal, which would ultimately harm Oregon ratepayers and slow critical investment in clean energy and transmission infrastructure.

Utilities must be financially strong to invest in the future. At a time when Oregon urgently needs to expand clean generation, upgrade transmission systems, and implement robust wildfire mitigation strategies, SB 926A would move the state in the wrong direction. It increases financial uncertainty for utilities, undermining their ability to make the long-term investments needed for grid reliability and decarbonization.

Unlike other western states that are finding constructive, balanced ways to manage wildfire risk—through tools like liability caps, mitigation funds, and safety certifications—SB 926A takes a punitive approach. We have previously testified that this is the wrong strategy for addressing such a complex and far-reaching challenge. Oregon needs a solution that ensures accountability while also enabling the investments required to prevent further wildfire risk.

RNW members—developers of wind, solar, and energy storage—have already voiced concern about partnering with Oregon utilities due to the state's growing liability climate. Without a more stable and forward-looking policy framework, clean energy developers will continue shifting investments to other states that offer both accountability and certainty. We cannot afford to drive away investments in clean energy at a time when our system is so fragile and at risk of further climate related catastrophes.

We are also concerned that this proposal appears to be driven by issues currently being debated in active litigation. Historically, the Oregon legislature has not used the legislative

process to influence outcomes related to ongoing court cases. Given the significant negative implications this bill could have for Oregon ratepayers, we urge the legislature to take a broader perspective—one that considers the long-term impacts this proposal would have on all Oregonians.

I appreciate the opportunity to share these views.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "NHughes", with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Nicole Hughes
Executive Director
Renewable Northwest