



Clean water. Healthy rivers.

Testimony in support of SB 1582: Community Based Power submitted 2/8/26

Chair Sollmon, Vice Chair Brock Smith and Members of the Senate Energy and Environment committee:

Columbia Riverkeeper is a 25 year old organization with a mission to protect and restore the water quality of the Columbia River from the headwaters to the ocean and all life connected to it. We represent more than 25,000 members, including 10,000 Oregonians.

Columbia Riverkeeper enthusiastically supports HB 1582 which would scale up Community-Based Power, also known as Virtual Power Plants, in Oregon.

Community-Based Power changes the relationship between people and energy. No longer would Oregonians just be consumers of energy from centralized power plants. With Community-Based Power, we could use our own energy resources such as electric vehicles, smart thermostats and water heaters, solar, and battery storage systems to support a smarter, more flexible electric grid. With Community-Based Power, Oregonians can be part of the solution for a reliable grid and lower energy costs. Some benefits of Community-Based Power includes:

- Cut peak demand
- Avoid expensive new infrastructure
- Keep bills lower
- Reduce blackout risk

This kind of creative, inexpensive, fast, and participatory way of addressing our energy needs is a key part of a modern energy system. It would help Oregon move away from the destructive energy systems of the past such as fossil fuels, and overreliance on big hydro that have wreaked havoc on the Columbia River, salmon populations, and river communities.

We urge you to vote yes on SB 1582 and support Community-Based Power for Oregon.

Respectfully submitted,

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