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## SOLAR DESIGN & INSTALLATION

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Chair Sollman, Vice Chair Smith and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. My name is Katie Martin Kabb and I am the Construction Manager for Elemental Energy.

Elemental Energy is a locally owned and operated solar contractor based in Portland. We serve commercial and residential consumers across Oregon and SW Washington and recently celebrated our 15th anniversary. This marked a milestone that included growing from 2 owners to over 50 employees.

This is my first testimony here in the capital, but I am here and overcoming my nerves because of Senate Bill 1582. Oregonians need better access to battery solutions and solar small businesses need your support. Virtual Power Plants address both.

As you may know, many solar businesses in Oregon are struggling right now. The end of the federal solar tax credit in 2025 was and continues to be a significant challenge. While we are confident the solar industry will rebound, new market opportunities will be essential to sustaining our workforce and small businesses. At Elemental, we have already experienced layoffs across both our administrative and field teams.

We appreciate the pilot programs that exist today. Elemental customers have had a successful experience with PGE's Smart Battery Pilot Program. This demonstrates that the program works in practice, however, without an upfront incentive participation has remained limited.

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PacifiCorp's program includes an upfront incentive, but its rollout has been hindered by early challenges and a lack of alignment with Energy Trust of Oregon incentives.

*We are ready to scale this work beyond pilots and Senate Bill 1582 will do that. But in addition to scaling - we need speed. And third party aggregators can make that happen.*

Senate Bill 1582 directs utilities to create programs, but allowing third-party aggregators will speed implementation and expand access. In other states utilities work seamlessly with third party aggregators to manage the Virtual Power Plants. Elemental already works with companies that are seasoned aggregators in other states such as SolarEdge, Franklin, Tesla and Enphase. Aggregators are a great example of a public-private partnership that Oregon can replicate from other State's successful policies.

Oregon small businesses are ready to get to work. We at Elemental know the products and programs are effective and we are ready to bring them to ratepayers at any income level. With increasing utility rates, the time is now to expand these programs that save customers on their bills, as well as provide jobs to a solar workforce in uncertain times.

As an Oregon small business we urge this committee to support Senate Bill 1582. If we have policy certainty in place, it will benefit not only the consumers participating in the programs but Elemental and other solar contractors that can hire back the employees we lost and begin to grow again.

Respectfully,



Katie Martin Kabb

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Construction Manager

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