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OREGON STATE SENATE

Testimony in Support of [SB 1582-2](#)

February 9, 2026

Chair Sollman, Vice Chair Smith, and Members of the Senate Energy and Environment Committee,

For the record, I am Senator Courtney Neron Misslin. Thank you for hearing SB 1582-2, a bill to ensure a path forward for community-based virtual power plants in Oregon.

Virtual power plants, or VPPs, allow energy resources located at a home or business, like battery storage or solar panels, to be aggregated and pulled onto the grid for more local energy supply in times of peak need.

I get the question a lot, “what’s a VPP?” If you have solar panels on your roof, you might be a good candidate for participation in a virtual power plant. If you have an electric vehicle charging in the garage at night, you might be able to connect it to community-based power. If you have a smart thermostat, you are ready to go. And, unlike a physical power plant, a virtual power plant isn’t one location. It is a whole community of energy users making strategic choices and helping to make the most out of already-installed devices and decrease the load on the grid.

This bill concept was introduced in the 2025 session as HB3609 and passed to Ways and Means. I decided to continue the work on it this session because I see it as one of the most strategic climate and energy moves Oregon can make to maximize grid capacity on a short timeline and keep costs lower for ratepayers.

With that goal in mind, we developed the -2 amendment to make some important, practical changes to ensure the bill is implemented effectively. The amendment:

- directs the PUC to create a regulatory framework for aggregator standards, and customer data protections,
- Creates rules for how utilities and aggregators will work together ensuring a fair, transparent marketplace
- Outlines standards governing aggregator participation, including the conditions in which a utility may grant, revoke or suspend an aggregator’s participation
- It allows the utilities themselves to function as aggregators alongside third parties
- It also clarifies a full exemption for a very small group of customers in eastern Oregon who are serviced by the Idaho Power system.

This policy directly aligns with the Governor's Executive Orders and Oregon's Energy Strategy. In addition, PGE has been piloting VPP programs with consistent success and I believe Oregon is ready to move to the next level and lead the way to wider and more robust rollout of distributed power solutions across the state. We need both long-term and short-term solutions to our electricity demand issues.

I want to take a moment to appreciate that PGE and Pacificorp have successful Virtual Power Plant programs already underway. The bill language before you respects their work, allows them to keep what they have, and moves us forward.

The PGE programs include smart thermostats, time of day pricing, peak time rebates, and smart EV charging. Their battery program, however, has been in a pilot phase for five years. Pacific Power has no EV charging program yet, but their battery program is up and running.

That said, The [Oregon Energy Strategy](#) identified a **major structural hurdle** in the Investor Owned Utilities business model, stating, "investor-owned utility business models continue to benefit more from capital investments in infrastructure than from investments in programs like demand response and virtual power plants." As a result, utilities lack strong financial incentives to scale program-based distributed energy resources, even when those resources deliver significant public benefits.

Ultimately, this bill is what Oregon needs to address affordability and resiliency. Community-based virtual power plants improve reliability and help prevent rolling blackouts, but they also keep costs down. What we need is a full, statewide rollout that maximizes the important investments that we have already made. When power is shared back to the grid during peak demand, it can replace more expensive options, making the program even more affordable.

My intention with this bill is to ensure Oregon policies move us in a competitive and clean energy direction with greater speed. We need to grow these programs much faster to meet surging electricity demand. Existing programs could have much higher adoption rates and expanded success if third party aggregators were able to participate, which is how this bill helps move us forward. We need these higher adoption rates for economies of scale and to bring the greatest cost savings to all ratepayers.

I urge your support for SB 1582 (with the -2 amendment). Thank you.

Sincerely,



Senator Courtney Neron Misslin