



February 13, 2026

Senate Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE Salem Oregon 97301

Oregon Clean Grid Collaborative's response to SB 1553

Dear Chair Prozanski, Vice-Chair Thatcher, and members of the committee,

The Oregon Clean Grid Collaborative (OCGC) respectfully submits this testimony in response to SB 1553, legislation that would prohibit electric utilities from recovering certain costs from ratepayers related to wildfire litigation.

OCGC represents environmental justice, ratepayer, conservation, labor, and clean energy advocates from across Oregon who are committed to ensuring that Oregon transitions quickly, efficiently, and equitably to clean energy. Specifically, we seek to ensure that grid planning, governance, markets, and investments are aligned to maximize the power of the grid and prioritize reliability; accelerate grid decarbonization; equitably, affordably, and reliably deliver clean energy resources to end users and prioritize community benefits; support meaningful economic development in the region that prioritizes family-wage job creation in Oregon; and minimize impacts to environmental and cultural resources.

We share the underlying values reflected in SB 1553 including the need to address utility wildfire liability, the need for victim recovery funds, and the importance of protecting ratepayers who are already bearing significant costs associated with upgrading and expanding Oregon's electric grid. Many Oregonians are struggling with rising electricity costs, and any policy addressing wildfire liability must carefully consider impacts to ratepayers.

With that said, OCGC is increasingly concerned about the potential unintended consequences of SB 1553. As drafted, this bill could negatively impact utility credit ratings, which would increase the cost of capital, and in turn, raise the cost of utility investments in grid infrastructure. These increased costs would ultimately be shouldered by the same ratepayers this bill aims to protect.

OCGC is also concerned that the bill could undermine Oregon's competitiveness and hinder the development of clean energy generation and infrastructure. These impacts could further increase costs and delay investments needed to maintain a safe, reliable, and affordable energy system.

Given the complexity of wildfire liability, utility financing, and system impacts, OCGC believes additional time is needed to fully understand the consequences of this proposal and evaluate alternative policy approaches.

For these reasons, OCGC urges the committee to not advance SB 1553 right now, and instead commit to continuing this conversation over the interim with a robust range of stakeholders. A collaborative process would allow the legislature to move forward with a better understanding of all the tradeoffs, unintended consequences, and policy options to address wildfire liability while protecting ratepayers and maintaining Oregon's clean energy future.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

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