

**Testimony to the Senate Rules Committee
re: SB 1034**

June 3, 2025

**Ben Brint, Senior Climate Program Director
Oregon Environmental Council**

Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance equitable, innovative, and collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Re: Oregon Environmental Council opposition to SB 1034

Dear Chair Jama and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) and our thousands of members throughout the state, I strongly oppose SB 1034. This legislation would fundamentally undermine Oregon's ability to meet our climate goals by creating unnecessary barriers to renewable energy development at a time when rapid deployment is essential.

OEC opposes SB 1034 because:

Climate action requires urgent renewable energy deployment. The climate crisis demands that we accelerate clean energy development, not slow it down. Oregon's HB 2021 greenhouse gas emissions reduction goals depend on our ability to rapidly site and build renewable energy and transmission infrastructure. SB 1034 would make permitting even more difficult and time-consuming, directly threatening our state's ability to meet these critical climate commitments.

The bill removes EFSC's balanced approach to statewide planning. The Energy Facility Siting Council currently coordinates with local jurisdictions while maintaining the ability to consider statewide planning goals alongside local land use requirements. SB 1034 would eliminate this balanced approach, removing EFSC's authority to approve projects that serve broader state interests when they conflict with local regulations. This undermines the very purpose of having a state-level energy facility siting process.

The legislation creates unnecessary complexity and delays. Oregon's energy permitting process already takes years to complete. SB 1034 would force developers to navigate conflicting jurisdictional regulations and increase the likelihood of legal disputes over inconsistencies between state and local requirements. These additional layers of complexity will delay critical clean energy projects and increase costs, ultimately making Oregon less competitive for renewable energy investment.

EFSC's current process already incorporates local input. The existing framework includes robust opportunities for local governments and communities to provide input through public meetings, hearings, and official comment periods. Local concerns are already considered in EFSC's final decisions. SB 1034 would not improve local engagement but would instead create jurisdictional conflicts that could paralyze the siting process.

Oregon needs to streamline, not complicate, clean energy permitting. As other states compete to attract renewable energy development and the associated economic benefits, Oregon should be removing barriers to clean energy deployment, not creating new ones. SB 1034 moves us in the wrong direction at a critical time for both our climate goals and economic competitiveness.

The urgency of the climate crisis requires that we prioritize solutions that accelerate clean energy deployment while maintaining appropriate environmental and community protections. EFSC's current balanced approach accomplishes this goal. SB 1034 would undermine this balance and threaten Oregon's climate progress.

Oregon Environmental Council and our thousands of members throughout the state urge you to oppose SB 1034.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ben Brint".

Ben Brint
Senior Climate Program Director
Oregon Environmental Council
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