



House Committee on Energy and Environment
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem Oregon 97301

March 8, 2021

Dear Chair Marsh, and members of the committee,

The Oregon Solar + Storage Industries Association (OSSIA) is a trade association founded in 1981 to promote clean, renewable, solar technologies. OSSIA members include businesses, non-profit groups, and other solar industry stakeholders. We provide a unified voice of the solar industry and focus exclusively on the solar value chain; from workforce development to permitting, advocacy, policy, and regulation for manufacturing, residential, commercial, community, and utility scale solar and storage projects on the local, state and regional level.

OSSIA supports HB 2488 and strongly encourages the committee to consider strengthening the language in order to specifically include renewable energy generation, in order to maximize community benefits.

Oregon's land use laws were created decades ago before we had a full picture of climate change and its impacts, especially on environmental justice and disadvantaged communities. HB 2488 will create a new land use goal to ensure that the state is appropriately focused on climate change mitigation and adaptation and addressing climate justice.

The land use goals were also written before we had the advanced renewable energy technology that we do today. While "energy conservation" is a technology specifically mentioned in the existing land use goals, renewable energy generation was not mentioned when the goals were drafted in the 1970's. We now know of the benefits that renewable energy projects bring to Oregon: well-paid jobs for Oregonians, property tax benefits and indirect economic development benefits in the communities where projects are located, and climate benefits of clean energy generation replacing fossil fuels.

OSSIA urges the committee to include specific language regarding renewable energy generation in HB 2488. Inclusion would provide much needed clarity for communities wanting to site projects, to help determine the best places for projects to be built. Unfortunately, without including this language, there will continue to be confusion as the renewable energy industry, the Department for Land Conservation and Development, and counties try to balance varying land uses and determine the best places for these important projects. More clarity will mean more projects built in the right places, which means more jobs and revenue for rural Oregon.



OSSIA is currently engaged in workforce development efforts to diversify the solar workforce and create opportunities for historically disadvantaged communities in the solar industry. We are eager to increase our workforce and employ more people in this important sector for our state and for the climate. The inclusion of renewable energy generation in HB 2488 will help create more jobs, for more projects, located in the right places.

Sincerely,

Angela Crowley-Koch
Executive Director