



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

June 5, 2025

Chair Jama, Vice-chair Bonham 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-profits, and other solar and storage stakeholders. We provide a unified voice of the solar industry and focus exclusively on the solar and storage value chains; 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 opposes SB 1034, which would upend the state permitting process through the Energy Facilities Siting Council (EFSC). This bill is an attempt to overturn a unanimous Supreme Court ruling issued last year. Additionally, the proposal would put a large burden on counties and would increase renewable project permitting delays. OSSIA also opposed the -3 amendment to SB 1034. While we appreciate the effort to find common ground, the amendment will not provide the needed clarity and assurance for renewable projects to move forward.

Oregon is already one of the most challenging - if not THE most challenging - states to permit solar projects. Oregon is at an important moment where state and federal policies and incentives are aligned to spur clean energy economic growth. However, Oregon is missing out on opportunities – building renewable projects in Oregon is riskier, more expensive and takes longer. Out of **seven states** one OSSIA member works in, Oregon is the riskiest.

Here is a comparison of permitting timelines between Oregon and Idaho:

	Idaho	Oregon
Small projects	\$5-\$30K, less than six months	\$50-\$100K, 3 mo – 1 year
Large projects	\$10-\$30K, 6 mo -1 year	\$500K-\$2 M, 1-2 years

If Oregon's renewable permitting system is not fixed, Oregon will essentially be exporting our climate goals - and the economic development benefits that come with them - to other states.

These other states may not have our land-use, wildlife and historical artifacts protections – the safer choice for the environment is to site projects in Oregon.



Due to the siting challenges in Oregon, the Legislature in 2023 directed the Department of Land Conservation and Development to create a Rules Advisory Committee (RAC) with the purpose of "Finding Opportunity and Reducing Conflict in Siting Photovoltaic Solar Power Generation Facilities." This RAC included all stakeholders – counties, 1,000 Friends, Cattlemen, Wheat Growers, Farm Bureau, Irrigators, the Nature Conservancy, renewable interests, labor and the tribes and more. The RAC has agreed on several new pathways for permitting after over a year of work and the Land Conservation and Development Commission is set to vote on those new pathways in June.

SB 1034 would take Oregon in the opposite direction and would negate the work over the past year and a half to streamline solar permitting.

SB 1034 tries to fit the square peg of county permitting into the round hole of EFSC permitting by requiring county sign-off of every renewable project. Large renewable projects are required to be permitted through EFSC, which has the staff capacity and expertise to evaluate large projects that may cross county lines.

While we appreciate that the -3 amendment was proposed in order to find compromise, unfortunately the amendment will only create more hurdles. The amendment language requires that the applicant either comply with local ordinances or "work with the county government to mitigate any issues or concerns the county government raised..." This language "work with" is too vague and will result in costly lawsuits that will delay projects. Does "work with" mean meetings in order to try and find a solution? What if a solution cannot be agreed upon? Would the effort still count as complying with the law? The language provided in the amendment is unclear.

As you can see from the written testimony submitted in opposition, farmers and ranchers in areas with little water depend on supplemental income from renewables to keep their farms alive. SB 1034 would take five steps backward on renewable siting, at the exact same time one small step forward is being taken at the agency level.

Sincerely,

Angela Crowley-Koch
Executive Director