

Chairman Sollman, Vice Chairman Smith and committee members.

I'm writing in opposition to SB 1034.

I'm a strong believer in private property and landowners rights, as well as county and local government.

That being said, I find SB 1034 to be flawed with regard to renewable energy.

I spoke with Senator Nash last Wednesday, to better understand this bill. In listening to his explanation, it struck me that the counties making decisions on renewables projects comes with a risk of subjective rulings. Court member/members may have a personal bias against renewables. According to testimony a Special Advisory Group will make a recommendation or decision on proposed projects within a county. How would a SAG (Special Advisory Group) be appointed? How can their objectivity be guaranteed? Will a SAG be guaranteed to be an unbiased entity? Will they be required to consider the findings of EFSC?

The current Sherman County Court solidly supports renewable energy projects, but future county leaders may have different opinions. SC had a small anti solar group who wanted to recall our court.

EFSC uses an objective extensive vetting process when permitting renewable projects. According to the Oregon Department of Energy, "The Oregon Department of Energy (ODOE) administers the EFSC siting process which consolidates state agency and local government regulations into a single review process. Before a large energy facility is built in Oregon, a developer must apply and receive a site certificate from EFSC." The process already includes county government. It's normal for energy companies to meet with the county court to discuss their plans.

Let me give you an example: Sherman County has been transformed by the money from renewables. Our fire departments, sheriff's department, road department, and school with grades 1 through 12, and small businesses have benefited greatly.

As SIP money from early wind projects in north Sherman County sunsets, we have an opportunity to put solar arrays on low value Ag land in south Sherman County, and continue the money stream. If we had opposition county leadership they could vote down projects approved by EFSC. It would be disastrous.

Oregon has become a hotspot for AI, data centers, Nvidia, Facebook, and Google. They use tremendous amounts of electricity, and we want to provide it.

The next step is incorporating Ag Voltaics into solar arrays. It's working in other states, and foreign countries. We're fortunate to have Chad Higgins, the world's foremost authority on Ag Voltaics, at Oregon State.

If bill SB 1034 passes, negative out comes on renewable project proposals will impact private property rights, the landowner, county economics, and the State of Oregon's economy.

The EFSC process is long and laborious, but it's objective, and it works.

Thank you,

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