

**Testimony to the House Business and Transportation Committee  
on HB 1519  
February 12, 2018**

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

**Oregon Environmental Council opposes 1519 and -1 amendments.**

Oregon needs a strong, well-resourced state energy department with technical expertise, a thumb on the pulse of emerging technologies, and experience with policies throughout Oregon and the region. ODOE needs to be a forward-looking agency that helps steer Oregon into 21<sup>st</sup> Century energy use.

Energy touches every aspect of our lives and energy technologies are quickly evolving. But the harmful consequences of energy resources—including contributing to dangerous climate change—must also be considered. This can be done while balancing stability and affordability.

Unfortunately, SB 1519 and particularly the -1 amendments set the state's energy vision back by softening language on sustainable energy and eliminating that the state should discourage inefficient energy use. It also contains no mention of climate change, a startling omission given it is 2018 and climate impacts are already impacting our state, our communities, and Oregon's natural resource economy.

We are concerned about the make up of the Oregon Energy Commission. The focus is entirely on energy consumers. And while members must be "well-informed" about climate, none is required to have specific expertise, nor does the Commission have a charge to address climate change and the renewable energy perspective is missing.

Climate change must be factored into energy decision-making. Energy production can contribute to climate pollution and energy facilities are at risk from climate impacts. For example, Oregon's hydro system is vulnerable to droughts and forest fires can impact transmission lines. It also removes the charge to educate the public about energy conservation, a vital strategy for ensuring energy remains affordable and is a cost-effective way to reduce climate change.

We are concerned about limiting funding for the agency. The changes to both the percentage and the threshold for exemption are troubling.

It's time to move Oregon forward on energy. Unfortunately, this bill moves Oregon backward.

Please vote no on SB 1519 and the -1 amendments.