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OPUDA Testimony in Support of SB 508, Hydro is Renewable Power

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon People's Utility District Association (called OPUDA) includes six People's Utility Districts (known as PUDs) which provide electric service in Oregon. OPUDA utilities serve nearly two-thirds of the Oregon coastline, parts of Columbia and Multnomah counties, Lane County, and as far east as Wasco County. Oregon's electric PUDs collectively serve over 200,000 people and deliver over 4.5 billion kilowatt hours of electricity to Oregonians annually.

Oregon PUDs provide their customers with electricity that is near-zero carbon, which is one of the highest rates of clean energy in the United States. Oregon has deployed the highest concentration of renewable generation in the country through the Pacific Northwest's Federal Hydro System. PUDs have developed additional renewable energy including cogeneration, wood waste, bio-mass, agricultural waste, landfill gas, and "fish-friendly" hydropower. Oregon's PUDs offer innovative energy solutions supporting renewable energy such as solar and wind, energy efficiency programs and conservation as a resource. Additionally, since the mid-1970s, Oregon PUDs have made major investments in energy efficiency and conservation programs, helping their customers reduce energy consumption. PUDs are on-track to exceed the Northwest Power and Conservation Council targets for energy efficiency savings.

OPUDA appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony on SB 508, which specifies that hydroelectric energy may be used to comply with the state's renewable portfolio standard (RPS). Hydroelectricity is a valuable, clean source of electricity for our customers. With that in mind, all hydroelectricity should be treated like other valuable renewables. At a time when the state is considering a statewide carbon reduction cap, it does not make sense to keep in place an impediment to realizing full-value for our state's natural hydropower system. Hydropower is a renewable resource and it should be recognized as such under Oregon law.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important bill.

Thank you,

Roger Howe, Northern Wasco PUD Board Member and OPUDA 2019 President