

**DOUG WHITSETT**  
STATE SENATOR  
DISTRICT 28



WM/431

Committees:  
Member:  
Joint Ways & Means

RECEIVED

OREGON STATE SENATE  
900 COURT ST NE  
SALEM, OR 97301

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P.U.C.

December 6, 2013

**The Oregon Public Utilities Commission**

**RE: Support for an Oregon Institute of Technology request for a specific waiver of the net metering kilowatt limit (OAR 860-039-0010)**

Dear Oregon Public Utility Commissioners:

We are writing in support for Oregon Institute of Technology's request for a specific waiver of the net metering kilowatt limit as provided in OAR 860-039-0010. We are encouraging the Commission to adopt the waiver because the OIT request is unique in so many aspects.

The State Legislature designated the University as the Oregon Renewable Energy Center in 2001. It is the only Oregon University, and likely the only university in the nation, that is sited upon a commercial quality geothermal resource. The University's development of that resource, in conjunction with its installed solar photovoltaic generation capacity, will soon make OIT the only carbon free energy independent university in the nation.

OIT is already a national leader in developing and demonstrating renewable energy technologies. Its Renewable Energy Engineering Program offers the nation's first bachelor's degree in this discipline. Students and faculty researchers are developing and testing new technologies; thereby, increasing the competitiveness of the curriculum as well as increasing the value of the research, prior to commercialization. The requested waiver will greatly help the University to both display its first in the nation carbon neutral technology and to provide "hands on" instruction for its students in renewable energy engineering, installation and maintenance.

Oregon's public policy leaders have passed laws and signed agreements to reduce the state's greenhouse gas emissions. However, the technology to produce affordable renewable energy remains elusive. The requested waiver will greatly enhance the University's financial capacity to address this elusive deficit by better aligning our state's aspiration with our public policy. Saved financial resources will certainly help the University to teach renewable energy research and engineering to

more capable students

We believe that OIT research and its development of well-educated critical thinking renewable energy engineers will create many economic opportunities for companies and communities that rise to the renewable energy challenge by developing the practices and technologies that other states and countries will seek in order to reduce their own greenhouse gas emissions.

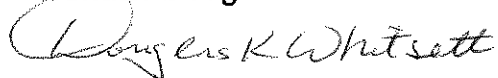
Oregon Tech is the appropriate place for our state to demonstrate that we can achieve carbon neutral communities. As the Pacific Northwest's only public institute of technology, OIT offers programs that deliver "cutting-edge concepts for real world solutions". Oregon Tech is nationally recognized for creating facilities and programs where theory and practical application intersect. Its geothermal and solar renewable energy generation facilities represent cutting edge renewable science.

For these and many other reasons the requested waiver will benefit ratepayers in the long run as OIT researches ways to integrate cost-effective renewable generation into our local communities. We believe that Oregon Tech should be commended for their efforts in environmental stewardship and be allowed the opportunity to utilize all of their generation on campus without spending millions of dollars to needlessly rewire their electrical infrastructure.

Finally, any legitimate costs incurred as the result of the net metering waiver must be paid by either ratepayers, taxpayers or by student tuition. We believe that these legitimate costs are best absorbed by the utility ratepayers because it is those ratepayers who will ultimately receive the most benefit from Oregon Tech's continued development of renewable energy engineering resources.

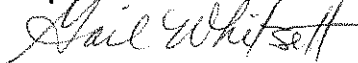
Sincerely yours,

Senator Doug Whitsett



23131 North Poe Valley Road  
Klamath Falls, Oregon 97693

Representative Gail Whitsett



23131 North Poe Valley Road  
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