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Oregon House Passes POWER Act With Strong Bipartisan Support
Landmark bill holds large energy users accountable, protects families and small businesses from rising energy costs

SALEM, OR — Today, the Oregon House of Representatives passed the **Protecting Oregonians With Energy Responsibility (POWER) Act (HB 3546)** with strong bipartisan support (41:16 in favor). The legislation addresses one of Oregon's most pressing energy challenges: rising utility costs driven in part by the explosive growth of energy-intensive data centers.

HB 3546 ensures that some of the largest and fastest-growing energy users in the state pay their fair share for the significant demands they place on Oregon's electric grid. By creating a new customer category for data centers within Oregon's investor-owned utility system, akin to an approach already used by some Oregon community-owned utilities, the bill allows regulators to fairly assign infrastructure and energy costs, rather than passing those costs on to Oregon households and small businesses.

"HB 3546 is a simple and straightforward bill to ensure that large energy users served by investor-owned utilities pay their own way. We aren't asking them to subsidize other users, and we aren't challenging the tax benefits that are often associated with development. We just want their bills to reflect the true costs of their electric service," **said Pam Marsh, State Representative for House District 5 in Southern Jackson County.**

"Oregonians are more and more burdened by increases in the cost of living. The POWER Act gives the Public Utility Commission new tools to protect Oregonians from unfair cost burdens while also supporting the reliability of the electric grid. I want to thank the advocates and legislators who came together to develop this bill. I look forward to signing this key piece of legislation when it hits my desk," **said Oregon Governor Tina Kotek.**

Over the past decade, data centers have rapidly expanded in Oregon, driving up energy demand and prompting costly new investments in grid infrastructure—a single 30 MW data center uses more power than the City of Ashland. Without proper cost allocation, these expenses are increasingly being shouldered by everyday Oregonians.

The POWER Act directly addresses this challenge by requiring data centers to sign long term contracts (minimum 10 years), ensuring they continue to cover the costs they create and helping utilities plan for a more stable, reliable grid.

"Home electricity rates are one of the most significant price increases that Oregonians are experiencing, and it's crucial that we find ways to stabilize those costs," **said State**

Representative Dacia Grayber for Southwest Portland and East Beaverton. "The people of Oregon should not foot the bill for massive data centers straining the power grid."

The POWER Act is a cornerstone of the 2025 Energy Affordability Package, a suite of bills designed to address energy burden and protect Oregonians from rising utility costs. HB 3546 ensures that affordability efforts are not undermined by unchecked growth in industrial energy demand. In 2024, Oregon's two largest electric utilities disconnected power to nearly 58,000 households and 1,930 small businesses for lack of payment, underscoring the urgent need for energy affordability solutions.

"Oregonians should not pay higher energy bills so that data centers get a discount, especially at a time when we are also experiencing a crisis of energy unaffordability. A record number of Oregon families were shut off from power last year because they could not afford their energy bills," **said Bob Jenks, Executive Director of Oregon Citizens' Utility Board.** "It is past time to demand that the data centers pay for the cost of serving data centers, instead of continuing to wrongfully assume that Oregonians will help them foot their energy bills."

"Oregonians are already working hard to keep up with rising housing and energy costs. HB 3546 ensures that the costs of our growing electricity needs—particularly from the explosive growth in data centers and other large energy users—aren't unfairly shifted onto families and small businesses," **said Nora Apter, Oregon Director for Climate Solutions.** "Today's bipartisan vote is a win for fairness, affordability, and accountability. This bill is an important tool to help ensure that we build a clean energy grid that is both reliable and equitable."

With today's House vote, the POWER Act now heads to the Oregon Senate, where advocates hope to see continued bipartisan momentum for a more affordable and equitable energy future.

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