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Subject: Comments regarding the proposed 2015-2019 Strategic Plan

Dear Amber,

Thanks for sharing your experience and expertise regarding energy conservation policy. We also appreciated your interest in the work of OESTRA pertaining to workforce issues and their nexus with energy production, efficiency, and conservation. Let's make time for the conversation to be an ongoing process.

You asked us to make suggestions to the proposed 2015-2019 ETO Strategic Plan from the perspective of our studies (see below). As you can see from the studies, there is a significant need for leadership to meet competing demands for engineering talent if those tasked with energy production efficiency, and conservation expect to meet their targets over the next five years. The following quote is taken from a 2013 study we funded with the Maseeh College of Engineering and Computer Science at Portland State University:

"Examination of the national, as well as Oregon-specific, engineering employment needs within the electric power industry shows two concurrent alarming trends: the power industry engineering workforce is 1) on the verge of a major contraction, with simultaneous 2) escalating employee demand.[1, 2, 3, 4] This is a result of large-scale retirements; paired with operational expansions from renewable portfolio standards, aging infrastructure replacements and increased power requirements on the bulk electric grid.[5, 6, 7, 8, 9] Training programs for power engineers currently do not have the ability to meet projected industry needs by the year 2020.[10, 11] Mechanisms for recruitment and training must advance in the immediate future, in order to maintain a stable power industry.

Between three major utilities in Oregon: Bonneville Power Administration, Portland General Electric and Pacific Power Corp, up to 510 engineers are eligible for retirement before 2020.[6, 7] Demands in Oregon to meet renewable portfolio standards, main-tain environmental quality, keep customer rates low, gain energy independence and provide increasing quantities of electrical supply lead to a maximum estimated additional 1,366 new power engineering positions by 2020.[12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17] From current power engineering graduation rates in Oregon, there will be an approximate maximum of 490 new power engineers in the State by 2020."

We respectfully ask that your Strategic Plan recognize the need for workforce skills that will be needed to staff your strategy and operational goals. A useful way to achieve this would be to make a sliver investment to assess workforce requirements needed to achieve your goals and collaborate with stakeholders to create training programs that would insure adequate talent. This would seem a logical step considering the talent concerns at ETO pertaining to staff attrition and training. OESTRA stands ready to meet and discuss these concerns in greater depth. We also are available to serve on a stakeholder task force if one is created at ETO.

A second suggestion is contained in a study jointly completed by the Center for Public Service and Northwest Economic Research Center at Portland State University this year. The

authors made the following comments in the conclusion of that study:

"The data presented here makes clear that Oregon is spending significant resources on energy related programs. These dollars go to a variety of purposes, ranging from the regulation of power producers and utilities, to attempts to build and expand energy related industries. We do not contest the value of these decisions by themselves, but submit that the cumulative size of these expenditures suggests the state would be well served by a more comprehensive look at them.

"The Governor's 10-Year Energy Action Plan identifies a number of specific goals for the state, and while it is beyond the scope of this report to evaluate progress toward those goals, we do suggest that approach as a reasonable route to take for further analysis of Oregon's energy related spending.

"Our interaction with the energy related spending we catalog here suggests that these decisions are too often made in isolation, and in pursuit of individualized policy or energy goals. Each of these goals can be justified and each are arguably in the interest of the state, or some constituency(ies). What does not appear to be sufficiently present is coordination amongst the spending decisions. Most of the work on this project was devoted to identifying and collecting the appropriate data. In the absence of readily-available, comparable data reports, coordination and prioritization is difficult, if not impossible."

We respectfully request that the ETO Strategic Plan establish a policy with other state agencies and programs to insure that your approach to 'cross cutting strategies for all energy programs' protects against program duplication (i.e. ODOE RETC?). This suggestion may require authority from the PUC to establish cross-agency guidelines.

Finally, you may also want to consider joining stakeholder meetings sponsored by the Engineering and Technology Council (ETIC). They are proposing to evolve their program to a Strategic Talent Industry Council (STIC) in order to address talent concerns across all industries in Oregon. ETO could be a voice for the energy sector during their deliberations and also take a first step toward energy conservation workforce security going forward.