

March 5, 2024
HB 2588 Proponent Testimony
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Chairman Fagg and Members of the Committee:

Last year, I advocated before the House committee for two pieces of legislation – HB 2227, a bill authorizing power purchase agreements, and HB 2228, a bill related to net-metering. Our friends in the utility industry were staunchly opposed to both pieces of legislation but did agree to engage in conversations about the legislation following the session.

We appreciated that Chairman Delperdang initiated conversations and brought all parties together to pursue common ground. From our perspective, it was a productive offseason and HB 2588 is a result of that work.

I want to quickly recap that for you and then will leave the details of the bill to my colleagues.

We began with individual meetings with stakeholders from Evergy, from the Cooperatives, and from the Municipal Utilities. At the outset, the Clean Energy Business Council expressed our recognition that there was great discomfort by the utilities for power purchase agreements and agreed to set aside discussion of that policy with the hopes that we could concentrate on policies where we could likely find common understanding – rooftop solar.

With Evergy, we had a place to start because of the existing statute. The result of our work is reflected in the legislation that we're discussing today. A lot of time was spent in review of current law, followed by consideration for the rapidly changing technology and ensuring clarity and consistency.

Our conversation with munis and coops was a bit different. These entities do not have net-metering laws on the books but certainly have customers seeking the ability to install rooftop systems on their homes and businesses. There is a patchwork of policies within the cooperative and muni territories that creates uncertainty and confusion in the market, for customers and installers.

We went into discussion with the hope that we could establish common terms and definitions that would better ensure the consistency and clarity desired. These were learning conversations and an exchange of ideas, marketplace challenges, and discussion of the rapidly changing technology. The municipal and cooperative organizations maintained that voluntary adoption of common terms and definitions was as far as they were willing to go.

The legislation you'll hear today is a first step we're proud to support and eager to see moved through the process, but it is indeed just a first step. There is still a great need for clarity and consistency especially in the municipal and cooperative territories. We look forward to continuing those conversations with the utilities, but for today, we offer strong support of HB 2588 and commend all involved bringing us to this place.