



March 9, 2026

Office of the Governor
900 Court Street NE, Suite 254
Salem, OR 97301-4047

Dear Governor Kotek:

In October 2025, we wrote to you expressing our deep concern about the State of Oregon's decision to restart litigation challenging the Columbia River System Operations (CRSO) Environmental Impact Statement. We did so respectfully and with urgency, asking for a conversation and reiterating your 2022 commitment that consumer-owned utilities (COUs) would have a "seat at the table" in discussions about the future of the Federal Columbia River Power System (FCRPS).

We never received a response.

Following Judge Simon's recent preliminary injunction requiring additional spill at the Columbia and Snake River dams, we are even more concerned about the path ahead. This ruling underscores exactly why it is so important for the State to work directly with the utilities that power more than one million Oregonians. Decisions of this magnitude, which directly impact energy reliability and costs, should not be made without meaningful input from the families and communities who will bear the consequences.

As you have said, "Too many Oregonians are struggling with high energy bills," and "every Oregonian deserves reliable, affordable energy." This is why the State's current direction feels so contradictory. Despite your statement that Judge Simon's decision will have only a "modest impact," on the region's "overall ability to maintain a reliable, affordable power system," preliminary analysis paints a much different picture – a 6% rate increase almost overnight because of this ruling. When adding this to cost-based rate increases within the last 12 months, our utility customers may face a 17% rate increase year over year. This does not represent a "modest" rate increase for our utility customers, nor most Oregonians by any stretch.

While your administration works to address affordability and the growing demand for clean energy, the State is simultaneously supporting litigation that threatens our most essential source of steady, carbon-free electricity. This is especially concerning now, as Oregon already faces serious resource adequacy challenges and a growing demand for electricity.

At a time of record forecasted load growth, the region has no clear plan to replace the firm,

dispatchable, carbon-free capacity provided by the FCRPS. The system is not simply a legacy resource, it is Oregon's cleanest and most reliable backbone, and it is becoming more valuable, not less, as the grid grows more constrained.

Our region has already come precariously close to rolling blackouts during extreme weather. This unprecedented reduction in operational flexibility via court order—without a replacement plan grounded in both capacity and transmission constraints—creates real reliability risk and very real rate consequences for Oregonians.

At the same time, COUs remain the primary funders of the world's largest fish and wildlife mitigation program. Through decades of investment in fish passage, habitat restoration, and predation management, we have demonstrated that salmon recovery and hydropower can and must coexist. We have never walked away from that responsibility.

But litigation without collaboration, and now court-driven operational mandates, move us further from a durable, science-based, regionally supported solution.

Governor, we are disappointed that our earlier outreach did not result in dialogue. The stakes are too high to continue down this path without direct engagement. Oregon's utility customers deserve transparency about the rate impacts, reliability implications, and long-term replacement strategy, if one exists.

We respectfully renew our request for a meeting with you at the earliest opportunity.

Respectfully,

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