



HB 2816 100% Clean Electricity for Big Tech

Background

In 2021, the Oregon Legislature passed the transformational 100% clean electricity bill, (HB 2021). It established a clear timeline for PGE, PacifiCorp, and energy service suppliers (ESSs) to achieve carbon-free power by 2040. HB 2021 does not apply to public power utilities or to Idaho Power, leaving some gaps and uncertainty in Oregon's clean energy future.

The exclusion of some utilities in HB 2021 resulted in some of the most energy-intensive facilities in Oregon, namely some data centers and cryptocurrency mining operations, not having to follow the same rules as other businesses in their energy consumption. Very large data centers being built now can require more than 100 megawatts (MW) of power capacity each —**enough to power around 80,000 U.S. households** (U.S. DOE 2020). Northwest Planning and Conservation Council projects the electricity use of data centers in Oregon will more than double by 2040. One Eastern Oregonian utility's carbon pollution has already increased by 543% per megawatt hour since 2010, when Amazon data centers arrived.

While data centers are already among the state's largest energy users with many more planned for coming years, more fossil energy-intensive mining for cryptocurrency may also be on the horizon. Together, these industries represent a significant portion of Oregon's electricity load potentially unregulated by our clean energy laws.

Recent Headlines

- [As Amazon expands in eastern Oregon, regional carbon emissions soar, *The Oregonian*](#)
- [Bitcoin Miners Are Flocking to Oregon for Cheap Electricity. Should We Give Them a Boost? The arrival of cryptocurrency miners in The Dalles offers a strange opportunity for the state—and a big environmental threat, *Willamette Weekly*](#)
- [Bill would require data centers, crypto miners to meet Oregon's clean energy targets, *The Oregonian*](#)
- [Washington and Oregon may regulate the wild West of crypto mining, *Crosscut*](#)
- [Amazon fuel cells would use natural gas to power Oregon data centers, increasing carbon footprint, *The Oregonian*](#)



Legislative Fix

To address this issue, HB 2816 will ensure 100% Clean Electricity for Big Tech too.

HB 2816 is a narrowly tailored bill focused on ensuring energy-intensive data centers and cryptocurrency mining operations will be on a path towards 100% carbon-free power. This legislation seeks to ensure that by:

- *Aligning clean energy requirements of data centers and cryptocurrency operations with those established by HB 2021 and already required of PGE, PacifiCorp, and ESS's.*
- *Data centers and cryptocurrency operations will need to demonstrate to DEQ that they have 60% carbon-free power 80% by 2030, 90% by 2035, and 100% by 2040.*
- *Regulating the end user of the electricity (the datacenter or cryptocurrency mining operation), not the energy provider like public utilities.*
- *Applying only to the very small number of data centers and cryptocurrency mining operations that locate their facilities in places outside the regulation of HB 2021. Operators of these facilities have the option to either purchase clean energy on the market, construct their own renewable energy infrastructure, or invest in and receive energy from a solar or wind farm.*

All the major tech companies operating in Oregon already have internal commitments to power their facilities with 100% clean energy by 2030. That means many of these facilities are already in compliance with the bill's requirements or will be in compliance well before the 2040 target. We hope and expect that for many of these companies, this legislation will serve as a backstop to ensure compliance is achieved.

HB 2816 ensures that all businesses in Oregon are playing by the same rules. As data centers continue to bring jobs and economic development to Oregon, and cryptocurrency mining continue to seek out the Pacific Northwest as a base of operations, we must ensure they also take part in Oregon's clean energy transition alongside other economic sectors of the state.

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