



STATE OF WASHINGTON

ENERGY FACILITY SITE EVALUATION COUNCIL

PO Box 43172 • Olympia, Washington 98504-3172

October 31, 2022

Honorable Reuven Carlyle, Chair
Honorable Shelly Short, Ranking Member
Senate Environment, Energy & Technology Committee

Honorable Christine Rolfes, Chair
Honorable Lynda Wilson, Ranking Member
Senate Ways and Means Committee

Honorable Joe Fitzgibbon, Chair
Honorable Mary Dye, Ranking Member
House Environment and Energy Committee

Honorable Noel Frame, Chair
Honorable Ed Orcutt, Ranking Member
House Finance Committee

Honorable Timm Ormsby, Chair
Honorable Drew Stokesbary, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Honorable Members:

I am pleased to provide you with the final report of the Transmission Corridor Work Group (TCWG), in accordance with Section 25 of the Clean Energy Transformation Act of 2019 (CETA).ⁱ

The TCWG, convened by the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council (EFSEC), had three goals:

- 1) Review the need for new or upgraded transmission to meet Washington's renewable energy goals,
- 2) Identify where transmission and distribution facilities may need to be enhanced or constructed, and
- 3) Identify environmental review options and recommend ways to expedite review of transmission projects without compromising required environmental and cultural protection.

The group included a wide range of parties with an interest in transmission and clean energy, including representatives from sovereign tribal governments, multiple state agencies, Washington's cities and counties, utilities and PUDs, labor, clean energy developers and statewide environmental organizations, as well as the Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) and the US Department of Defense. During a series of six meetings from September 2021 to June 2022, this highly diverse group worked together to develop shared principles. TCWG members individually affirmed that the recommendations described in the TCWG Report accurately reflects the group's deliberations, with the exception of one participant who chose to remain neutral.

I would like to highlight several key points that emerged from the work of the TCWG, which are covered in greater detail in the Final Report:

- **Regional and interregional planning.** Washington has long relied on out-of-state sources for its energy needs. Reliance on those sources is likely to increase in our clean energy future. It will be critical to have a strong state presence at the table for enhanced regional and interregional transmission planning. Timely engagement in clean energy transmission planning will ensure that the renewable energy Washington State needs can get to the homes and businesses that require it.
- **Staff resources in state agencies.** The state's critical role in transmission planning would be enhanced by the designation (and funding) of a team dedicated to coordinating state input to regional planning processes. We also need sufficient staff to perform the transmission siting work that will be required in the coming years, particularly in the realm of archeology and historic preservation.
- **Enhanced resources for Tribes.** The burden of paying for siting-related archeological and cultural review should not fall on the Tribes. It is critical that we identify mechanisms for funding Tribal governments to carry out this vital work.
- **Pre-application planning and coordination.** Key stakeholders believe the state currently lacks sufficient transmission infrastructure to meet CETA's 2030 targets for renewable energy. Given that it can take over 10 years to properly site a major transmission project, the needed planning work is already overdue and should begin as soon as possible.

During our workgroup meetings, thanks to input from BPA, Puget Sound Energy, and others, it became evident that there is an urgency to begin planning for the transmission infrastructure required to meet CETA's ambitious clean energy goals. With that need in mind, we are delivering this report two months ahead of schedule. I am also pleased to report that implementation planning for many of the key principles put forth in this report has already started. In addition, the draft report has informed the state's comments on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) Notice of Proposed Rulemaking on Transmission Planning and Cost Allocation.

I want to commend the spirit of cooperation and collaboration which existed among all the members of the work group. TCWG members shared their ideas and concerns, listened carefully to the concerns of others, and worked hard to find solutions that everyone could live with. It was

an honor to work with each of them. I am also proud of the work my EFSEC team did to support the TCWG, along with the fine consulting support we received from Ross Strategic.

Overall, I believe this Final Report outlines a path forward for ensuring we can deliver on the promise of a clean energy future for the state of Washington. Moreover, we have begun to build the positive relationships we will need among the diverse range of stakeholders who will work together to successfully develop key infrastructure projects in the coming years. There is much work to be done, but it is very encouraging to know that it is already underway.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kathleen Drew". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "K".

Kathleen Drew, Chair
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

cc: Bernard Dean, House Clerk
Sara Bannister, Secretary of the Senate

ⁱ [RCW 19.405.150](#)