

State Representative  
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## Rep. Bentz Appointed to Interim Committee on Dept. of Energy Oversight

SALEM—Oregon House Speaker Tina Kotek announced on January 6<sup>th</sup> the appointment of State Representative Cliff Bentz (R-Ontario), and three other State Representatives, to the Legislative Interim Committee on Department of Energy Oversight. They will join four Oregon State Senators on this Joint House and Senate Committee.

Oregon’s Department of Energy (“Department) has struggled mightily in its attempts to manage several green energy programs created by legislative action, most notoriously, the “BETC” (Business Energy Tax Credit).

Recently, Rep. Bentz and four other Republican lawmakers sent a letter to State and Federal authorities outlining alleged improprieties within the Department emphasizing several issues including the discounting of BETC tax credits process. These concerns had been brought to these Legislators by several state employees concerned about actions and inaction within the Department.

Rep. Bentz said: “The Department of Energy was originally established to oversee and regulate nuclear energy generation. Over time, its charge has been broadened to include management of many different important and often expensive programs. It is possible that as the Department has evolved, staffing, mission, funding and other elements of a focused and effective bureaucracy have not kept up with the duties delegated to the Department by the Legislature. The purpose of the Committee, although not yet fully developed by the Speaker and Senate President Courtney, will probably include a review where the Department stands from a work load perspective, what it is supposed to be or could be doing, and how effectively (or poorly) it is conducting its charge. As an eight year member of both the Revenue and Energy/Environment Committees, I appreciate the opportunity to participate in the necessary effort.”

Interim Committee appointments are made by the Speaker of the House of Representatives, pursuant to ORS 171.640. A complete list of committee assignments for the House and Senate for the 2015 Interim can be found on the Oregon Legislative Information System at:

<https://olis.leg.state.or.us/liz/2015I1/Committees>.

Rep. Bentz also sits on the Revenue Committee (Vice-Chair); the Transportation & Economic Development Committee; the Energy & Environment Committee; and the Joint Legislative Counsel Committee.

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