



NEWS RELEASE

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STATEMENT FROM THE OREGON RURAL ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE ASSOCIATION ON SENATOR
MERKLEY'S RURAL ENERGY SAVINGS PROGRAM

Salem, OR – "Oregon electric cooperatives applaud Senator Merkley for his proposal to encourage energy efficiency and create jobs in our rural communities," said Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association Executive Director Ted Case. "Oregon electric cooperatives have a long history of providing efficiency programs for our consumers. Senator Merkley's bill is another innovative tool for our utilities to consider."

Under Senator Merkley's proposal, co-ops will apply to the Rural Utilities Service (RUS) of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) to borrow money to fund local energy efficiency programs that meet RUS energy savings standards. Co-ops, in turn, use the money to make low-interest micro-loans to residences or small businesses that sign up for the voluntary program and that have a demonstrated ability to pay back the loans. Electric cooperatives will pay back the federal loans from consumer loan payments on their electric bills within 10 years of making the consumer loan.

The Oregon Rural Electric Cooperative Association represents 18 electric cooperatives in Oregon. These utilities serve in 34 of Oregon's 36 counties and provide electricity to 200,000 customers.

For additional information, contact Ted Case at (503) 910-9590.
