

Smith Holly

From: Kris Nelson <prin@phoenixfi.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 21, 2017 10:29 AM
To: HEE Exhibits
Subject: Testimony in Support of House Bills 2705, 2706, and 2707

Dear Chair and Committee Members,

When are we going to take the crucial steps to sustainably manage our state's precious water resources?

I support HB 2705 because measurement of water use has been identified as a need across the state for decades, but little progress has been made despite continued calls for smarter water management. Knowing how much and how quickly we are using our water resources is critical to ensuring fair and sensible management decisions – especially when considering new water permit applications in water scarce regions.

I support HB 2707 because one of the key findings of a December 2016 audit of the Oregon Water Resources Department's effectiveness is that groundwater protection needs more focus. However, at the pace of only two groundwater basin studies completed every five years, it will take decades to have a full accounting of our groundwater resources. Nearly one million Oregonians rely on groundwater for their drinking water source, and groundwater demand is increasing. More than 5,000 farms in Oregon rely on well water to survive. Groundwater also supplies a base flow for rivers, lakes, streams and wetlands – an important consideration for maintaining the health of Oregon's fish runs and spectacular landscapes.

I support HB 2706 because a December 2016 audit of the Oregon Water Resources Department found that the agency is chronically underfunded and lacks the resources to adequately manage our state's surface and groundwaters. Without a stable funding source, the Department can't fulfill its responsibilities to ensure the long-term sustainability of Oregon's rivers and water supplies, economy, and quality of life.

Sincerely,

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