

MEASURE: HB 4101  
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SUBMITTED BY: Peggy Lynch



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®  
OF OREGON  
*Action Alert*

February 13, 2012

Action Alert

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**OPPOSE HB 4101**

**Stop Another Attack on Columbia River Fish and Jobs!**

**To:** League Members

**From:** Peggy Lynch, LWVOR Action Committee Natural Resources

**Action Needed:** Contact Governor Kitzhaber and Legislators (see contact list below) and ask them to **Oppose House Bill 4101**.

**Deadline for Action: Take Action Today.** House Bill 4101 is scheduled for a hearing and possible work session in the House Energy, Environment and Water Committee on Tuesday, February 14.

**Message to Convey:** Stop the rollback of existing protections for Oregon's imperiled Columbia River salmon and steelhead! **Oppose HB 4101**

**Key Points to make in opposing HB 4101:**

- HB 4101 weakens Oregon's laws protecting our iconic Columbia River salmon and steelhead.
- HB 4101 jeopardizes recovery efforts for our imperiled Columbia River fish supporting family-wage jobs and economic activity in both small towns and urban areas.
- HB 4101 threatens the jobs, food production, and other economic benefits dependent on a healthy Columbia River.
- HB 4101 undermines the collaborative efforts of a coalition of Umatilla Basin water users to appropriate available winter water from the Columbia River for the Umatilla Basin Aquifer Recovery Project. **The League has supported this effort.**
- HB 4101 establishes a task force whose membership may not reflect the broad set of interests. It sets up a process where one interest can override the best interests of the broad set of needs in the basin. It seems to stack the deck against fair and balanced policy-making, and implies a predetermined outcome that may imperil salmon and steelhead.

**League's Position includes: *that wise planning for the use of water in the Columbia***

***River Basin requires an inventory of the water resource within the Basin, including all water-related information: ground and surface water sources, viable water rights, current use, and projected future needs. The inventory should be readily available to concerned agencies and the general public.***

Although the Task Force idea appeals to the League, we are concerned about the cost of this project at this time and the makeup and rules governing the Task Force. An inventory-collection of data-should be the basis of any Task Force work. The Columbia River is a significant and irreplaceable public resource. Any monies available for the Water Resources Commission this session should go toward completing the first Integrated Water Resources Strategy to be adopted this year. Currently there is not enough money to adequately engage the general public in that important decision.

**Background:** To address recognized dry season flow problems in the river and help recover endangered fish, Oregon seasonally limits new water withdrawals from the Columbia above Bonneville Dam unless mitigation water is provided. These seasonal limits and mitigation requirements coincide in time with the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's flow augmentation schedule in the Columbia and Snake Rivers. **HB 4101 would circumvent these salmon protection rules and allow up to 450,000 acre feet in new water withdrawals during critical summer months when federal and state agencies in the region are working together to meet target flows needed for fish.**

The bill ignores the 25,000 lost family wage jobs in the region caused by declining salmon and steelhead runs in the Columbia Basin - jobs lost in part due to poor habitat resulting from excessive water use in the dry season.

**Contacts and Legislators:**

Governor Kitzhaber Phone: (503) 378-4582 Email: [Governor@state.or.us](mailto:Governor@state.or.us)

Richard Whitman, Governor Kitzhaber's Natural Resources Advisor

House Energy Environment and Water Committee:

Rep. Jules Bailey, Co-Chair

Rep. Vic Gilliam, Co-Chair

Rep. Deborah Boone, Co-Vice Chair

Rep. Wayne Krieger, Co-Vice Chair

Rep. Cliff Bentz

Rep. Alissa Keny-Guyer

Rep. Jim Thompson

Rep. Brad Witt

Key Sponsor of the Bill, Rep. Mike McClane

**For more information:** Contact Peggy Lynch at [zuludar@aol.com](mailto:zuludar@aol.com)

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