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April 24, 2015

Senator Chris Edwards, Chair,
and Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2579

Dear Senator Edwards and Members of the Committee,

Rainbow Water District requests your support for HB 2579, a bill that passed the House with no opposition. HB 2579 would authorize our public utility, as a domestic water supply district, to contract with the Deerhorn Community Water Association, a private corporation that was formed to supply water to a rural subdivision. There are more than one hundred small water associations across the state, and we believe this bill could provide many others the optional ability to partner with a neighboring water district.

For 21 years, Rainbow Water District has had an intergovernmental agreement with the Marcola Water District to provide water system management, accounting, repairs and maintenance. We are able to do this as both water utilities were formed as ORS 264 domestic water supply districts. Deerhorn Community Water Association would like to contract with us for the same type of services, but ORS 264 does not specifically allow them this alternative.

While a small water utility like Deerhorn may hire a licensed operator to take water samples and manage the system, or a contractor to perform repairs, or an accounting firm to provide billing functions, our medium-sized water district is able to offer any or all of these services. We would benefit from some supplemental revenue, and the opportunity to motivate our employees with a variety of learning opportunities, and Deerhorn would benefit from the resources and expertise of a larger organization with 24/7 monitoring and response capabilities.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jamie Porter
Superintendent