

3/21/17

Representative Ken Holm, Chair
OR House Committee on Energy and Environment
Capitol, salem OR

Dear Chair Holm

I wish to enter in to the Committee Record my comments against HB 2705, 2707, & 2706.

Personally and corporately I have this year 50 years experience with water and water rights. This has been in a substantial way as a farmer operating on both sides of the Cascade Mts. both as an individual and with , the finest professionals CWE's in the business as it became necessary to use their services. In general I have the highest regard for the OWRD staff and administrators and feel I have been served fairly and well. They are however strained by demand and under funded!

However, the above referenced bills, while correct in highlighting the importance of water quantity, quality and regulation to all Oregonians, do not address in a real-world way the prioritization of gathering and more importantly using basin water information. These efforts need to be done very carefully and with priority to what is know today basin by basin, certainly starting on the east side of the state and moving west. These bills while identifying priority lack emphasis on the "Where", and certainly not in a practical way of the "How" and the "Cost".

The biggest error in what is being proposed in the Bills is related to the funding of this enterprise primarily on the backs of the farm community alone with no credits or creative ways to help with the costs. Next it assumes that the measuring equipment is durable, accurate and manageable, which it is NOT. Nothing of any measuring size can be put in place for under a few thousand dollars each for the smallest commercial sized pumps and they do not last more than a few years at most and have to be replaced over and over. There is absolutely NO way that the proposed bills can even start to deal with analyzing the information even if it could be provided. The PERS problem prohibit any real significant funding source to do what is necessary.

The above realities do not diminish the need for addressing the issue of water in Oregon. But doing it in the manners described in these bills only assures failure. Better Bills with adequate and broad based and stable funding, better measuring equipment and added personnel as needed is vital.

Sincerely,



Rob Miller

Mt. Jefferson Farms Inc.