



Association of  
Oregon Counties

**DATE:** APRIL 13, 2017

**TO:** JOINT COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS, SUBCOMMITTEE ON  
NATURAL RESOURCES

**FROM:** THE ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COUNTIES

**SUBJECT:** WATER RESOURCES DEPARTMENT 2017-19 BUDGET/SENATE BILL  
5542/POP 100.

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**REQUESTED ACTION:**

AOC respectfully recommends that the Subcommittee on Natural Resources support Policy Option Package 100, to facilitate restorations of reductions taken in POP 070, after House Bill 2295 becomes law.

**AOC STRONGLY SUPPORTS HOUSE BILL 2295 AND POP 100,  
WHICH WILL FACILITATE RESTORATION OF RESOURCES UNDER BY THE BILL**

The Water Resources Department's current fee schedule supports approximately 18.5 processing staff in the Water Right Services Division, as well as staff and engineering contracts in the Dam Safety Section. Last modified in 2013, the current fee schedule is due to sunset on June 30, 2017, reverting to 2009 fee levels, while costs are projected to increase by 15.88 percent over the next four years.

With the reductions in staff, it will take longer to process water right transactions as backlogs build, causing farmers, water providers, and others to wait longer to receive decisions on water supply proposals.

House Bill 2295 would retain current staffing levels through 2021 for water right processing and dam safety by removing the sunset on the current fee schedules and increasing fees by approximately 15.88 percent averaged over the four-year period (fee revenue \$838,000). The legislation would be effective July 1, 2017, the start of the fiscal year and the date on which the current fee schedule sunsets.

**AOC urges the Subcommittee to pass the companion package to HB 2295, POP 100.**