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February 22, 2018

Joint Ways and Means Capital Construction Subcommittee
Co-Chair Senator Fred Girod
Co-Chair Representative Paul Holvey
900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 5702 - Written Testimony for February 23, 2018 Subcommittee Meeting in Support of Bradshaw Drop Piping Project

Dear Co-Chair Girod, Co-Chair Holvey and Members of the Subcommittee:

I am writing to express 1000 Friends of Oregon's support for funding for the Rogue River Valley Irrigation District's proposed Bradshaw Drop piping project. 1000 Friends is a statewide non-profit organization whose mission includes the preservation of farmland so that it continues to be available for production. One of the best ways to ensure farmland stays farmland is to help farmers succeed in their farming endeavors, thus removing the pressures to convert that land to other uses. We believe this project is a critical part of a larger effort that will help keep farming viable in the Rogue Valley for generations to come.

The subject of this request is a piping project that will provide direct benefits to the patrons of the District within the project area, including a significant reduction in water loss, improvement in water quality and fish habitat, and the facilitation of pressurized irrigation water. At least as important, however, completion of this section will also serve as a demonstration of the efficacy of the Rogue Valley's larger WISE Project. When completed, the WISE project will provide a reliable source of pressurized irrigation water at a quality that will help producers meet federal and state food safety regulations and other requirements and ensure that Rogue Valley agriculture remains productive and competitive.

The WISE Project has been in the analysis and planning stages for many years. The Bradshaw Drop project is a critical early step in getting a piece of it built, and once functioning will be an on-the-ground example of the benefits of full build-out. It is our understanding from the Irrigation District that funding for this project is proposed to be included in SB 5702, which you are considering on February 23, 2018. We support inclusion of this project in that bill, and encourage its passage.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Greg Holmes", written over the word "Respectfully,".

Greg Holmes
Southern Oregon Planning Advocate
1000 Friends of Oregon