

**Testimony to the House Committee on Energy and the Environment  
on House Bill 2856**

**26 February 2019**

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

**Oregon Environmental Council strongly supports HB 2856.**

HB 2856 provides \$9,000,000 to the Oregon Water Resources Department to conduct groundwater studies, and investigations or the gathering and analysis of other ground water data. This information is vital to fulfilling the Department's responsibility to assess and manage Oregon's ground water resources.

Across Oregon increasing numbers of water users are turning to groundwater supplies. Properly managing water use requires the Department to fully comprehend the scope of the groundwater supply in each groundwater basin. However, only three of the state's 18 groundwater basins have been fully mapped. At current funding levels, the entire process will not be complete until 2026.

Oregonians cannot wait that long for a thorough and comprehensive understanding of our groundwater resources. In order to protect groundwater supplies while allowing for permitted uses and future permit requests, we must move faster.

**Oregon Environmental Council urges you to pass HB 2856, which will allow OWRD to acquire the information it needs to manage our groundwater resources.**