



HB 2085

Testimony of WaterWatch of Oregon By Kimberley Priestley

**Submitted to the House Committee on Natural Resources
March 5, 2019**

Founded in 1985, WaterWatch is a non-profit river conservation group dedicated to the protection and restoration of natural flows in Oregon's rivers. We work to ensure that enough water is protected in Oregon's rivers to sustain fish, wildlife, recreation and other public uses of Oregon's rivers, lakes and streams. We also work for balanced water laws and policies. WaterWatch has members across Oregon who care deeply about our rivers, their inhabitants and the effects of water laws and policies on these resources.

WaterWatch supports HB 2085 (with amendments)

WaterWatch is in support of clarifying and bolstering the Oregon Water Resources Department's dam safety authorities. As such, we support HB 2085's requirements for plans and specifications for modifications, guidance to owners as to maintenance responsibilities, clarification of the Oregon Water Resources Department's authority for action in the case of dam failure, improvement of the process for addressing maintenance and safety issues and granting the authority to impose civil penalties. We also strongly support the inclusion of fees to help fund the Department's important work in protecting the public; in fact we think they should be higher. With regards to the -1 amendment, we support the changes to Section 6 regarding dam removal. While we believe there are still a few amendments that still need to be made to this bill, we are generally supportive of the direction this bill is taking the state.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

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