



Amanda Fritz, Commissioner
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March 21, 2019

Senator Riley, Chair
Senate Committee on Business and General Government
900 Court Street NE, HR B
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SB 935 – Landscape contractor modified license

Dear Chair Riley and Members of the Committee,

The City of Portland opposes SB 935, which creates a path for landscape contractors to avoid licensure requirements currently included in ORS 671.571 and is outside the bounds of a recent rulemaking by the Landscape Contractors Board that created a new phase of license. Nationwide, landscape irrigation is estimated to account for nearly one-third of all residential water use, totaling nearly 9 billion gallons per day. Landscape contractors are important partners in the efficient use of water resources. Minimum education and licensure requirements ensure that those managing shared water resources have the knowledge and skill to be responsible stewards.

Rulemaking in late 2018 (OAR 808-003-0035) increased accessibility to licensure by creating a path for a modified license for landscape contractors and was the result of a collaborative process that included the Governor's office and stakeholders. The new rules, which went into effect February 1, 2019, included limited but important restrictions on scope of work, including irrigation systems. Eliminating this exemption is a step backward in the effort to promote water efficiency.

The Portland Water Bureau provides clean, reliable water to almost 1 million Oregonians. Oregon water utilities have worked in partnership with the landscape construction industry to develop the current licensing requirements in ORS 671.571 and OAR 808-003-0035. Those requirements help ensure a well-educated and knowledgeable irrigation industry that can respond effectively to changing irrigation practices, policies and technology and can continue to promote improved practices that result in effective water efficiency.

The City of Portland urges your opposition to SB 935. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Michael Stuhr, P.E.
Administrator, Portland Water Bureau
City of Portland

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