



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 100-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

February 4, 2020

To: House Committee on Water
Representative Ken Helm, Chair
Members of the Committee
Email: hwtr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: [HB 4071](#) – Addressing Harmful Algal Blooms – **SUPPORT**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon has multiple positions related to water quality and quantity: *“The League opposes degradation of all of Oregon’s surface and ground water.” “The League supports management approaches that maximize interagency communication to include....Coordination of activities including.....monitoring/testing....”*

As such, we support the purchase of equipment to analyze water samples for cyanotoxins and the staff to assist the Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ) in collecting samples during peak periods, while also supporting the Oregon Health Authority’s (OHA) request for staffing to help provide the public with information as they respond to cyanobacterial harmful algal blooms.

We have all seen an alarming increase in harmful algal blooms in our local rivers, lakes and even the ocean. As our climate continues to warm, our snowpack declines causing less river flow, and ocean currents change, these blooms are going to increase. A responsibility of government is public safety and this issue endangers Oregonians. Although this bill does not address the underlying cause of these blooms, at least the public can know if and when they occur in order to avoid harm. And local jurisdictions can take actions to protect their patrons’ drinking water.

Coordination between these state agencies and local jurisdictions will address public safety concerns regarding their drinking water. The funding request for \$95,000 to DEQ and \$100,000 to OHA are minimal asks for a critical public health and safety issue. We encourage your support for this legislation and the funding to implement it.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

Peggy Lynch
LWVOR Natural Resources
Coordinator

Amelia Nestler
LWVOR Drinking Water
Advisory Committee Member

Cc: Senator Betsy Johnson
Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Representative Dan Rayfield
DEQ Director Richard Whitman
OHA Director Patrick Allen