



WILLAMETTE PARTNERSHIP

March 4, 2021

Representative Helm
House Committee on Water

Re: Written Testimony in Support of HB 2018

Willamette Partnership submits written testimony in support of HB 2018 to collect and analyze critical groundwater data. Willamette Partnership is a conservation non-profit with a deep commitment to building stronger, healthier, and more equitable communities. We work with communities across Oregon to change how they build infrastructure, protect water sources and critical habitat, and manage farms and forests as a way to strengthen community resilience.

Across the state, Oregonians face complex water challenges. In many communities, water infrastructure is overburdened and there is inadequate water supply to meet growing demand. Changing precipitation patterns and land-use pressures further exacerbate existing water challenges. Water is increasingly scarce, more polluted, less seasonally reliable, and the future seems to hold more of the same.

HB 2018 offers a critical piece of the solution: better data. With robust groundwater data, locals can make informed decisions on water planning and water investments that are equitable, good for the environment, and good for their community. Harney County is an example of a community who used groundwater data to address their growing water challenges. HB 2018 expands water data so that other communities so they can make similar evidence-based assessments.

Willamette Partnership supports expanding groundwater investigations and providing communities with better data to make informed and equitable decisions. Together, we can respond to water challenges now and those to come.

Sincerely,

Sara O'Brien
Executive Director
Willamette Partnership
obrien@willamettepartnership.org