

HERMISTON IRRIGATION DISTRICT



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February 16, 2023

Attn: Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens
and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Re: Support for HB 3187

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens and Members of the House Committee,

I am writing today in support of HB 3187. The lack of Certified Water Rights Examiners (CWRE) in the State of Oregon has become burdensome to Districts and their patrons who are reliant upon transfers to move water rights to the areas where they are most beneficial and to stay compliant with Oregon water law.

Hermiston Irrigation District (HID) is located in Hermiston, Oregon, in the Umatilla Basin, in Eastern Oregon. HID delivers water to approximately 10,000 acres of agricultural land and processes transfers annually.

I conducted a search on the state's website for a CWRE in our area. I received a list of 444 professionals. Three were listed in the Hermiston area. I reached out to those three professionals. Two of them were retired. One is certified, but is primarily a land surveyor and does not do Claims of Beneficial Use often. There were no other CWRE's based within an 85-miles of Hermiston.

Many irrigation districts within the state of Oregon have staff with extensive knowledge of water rights, transfers, new water applications and water law. This bill does not change the exam components or continuing education requirements. It merely gives experienced individuals an opportunity to sit for the CWRE license exam.

HID asks for your support of HB 3187 to help districts meet the need of the agricultural communities by allowing qualified individuals the chance to sit for the CWRE exam.

Respectfully,


Annette Kirkpatrick
District Manager