

I submit this testimony in support of HB 2647 because it is a start in addressing a public health issue by prioritizing drinking water that impacts the vast majority of Oregonians.

As a concerned citizen, it is crucial to feel confident that Oregon continues to work in addressing the contamination of harmful algal blooms (HAB) not only in our drinking water but water used for recreational use by declaring HAB as a threat and requiring action. Like most Oregonians, I rely heavily on public drinking water, and access to safe water must be prioritized. I still remember the summer of 2018 when Salem's drinking water was contaminated with cyanotoxin, and the city issued a drinking water advisory. I recall driving to different cities looking for bottled water due to shortages within the Salem area. The contaminated water impacted my family and our four dogs from drinking it. Further, HAB has an economic impact on restaurants, fishing, and tourism industries, to name a few.

Since HAB has become more prominent in recent years, there is a need to increase research and monitoring efforts to develop strategies for preventing and mitigating HAB's effects. The increased frequency and severity of HAB has created a greater need for a better understanding of the causes and impacts of HAB to develop strategies for preventing and mitigating their effects. A few factors contributing to the increased frequency and severity of HAB are climate change and excessive runoff of nutrients such as fertilizer used in lawns and agriculture.

I am glad to see that Oregon is taking steps to address this complex issue. Even though Oregon has made strides in addressing and increasing awareness of harmful algal blooms, HB 2647 provides a floor of what is required from the Oregon Health Authority and the Department of Environmental Quality. Some key components, which I am glad to see in this bill, require developing a coordinated monitoring and response strategy, identifying water sources susceptible to HAB, identifying sources of pollutants, and monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the strategies. I do not see anything that prohibits continued development and coordination between different agencies from helping address this crucial issue.

For the above reasons, I request this committee vote in favor of HB 2647.

Thank you,

Daniel Trujillo M.