



**Oregon
Winegrowers**
ASSOCIATION EST 1981

February 23, 2023

TO: House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources & Water Committee

FROM: Oregon Winegrowers Association

RE: Support for HB 3164 – Split Season In-Stream Leasing Extension

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

The Oregon Winegrowers Association (OWA) represents hundreds of winery and grape growing members from every winegrowing region in Oregon, and our members represent two-thirds of Oregon’s overall wine production. For more than 40 years, OWA has been the leading advocate for Oregon wineries and growers. Today, we write as efficient irrigators committed to supporting water policy initiatives that balance protection of existing water rights with current and future water needs of all stakeholders.

OWA strongly supports expanding and strengthening policy options that create flexibility for right holders to share (i.e. lease, lend, leave in stream) unused water with other potential users within hydrological boundaries. Programs that allow water right holders to leave water in-stream, or lease/lend water to a third-party during times of down use reduce the waste of “use-it or lose-it” and maximize beneficial use. We believe the technical fixes in this bill as proposed – to both eliminate the program sunset and to allow for unlimited renewal of the split season in-stream leases—will further disincentivize waste of Oregon’s limited water resources.

For all these reasons, we support the current version of HB 3164.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this testimony.

Jana McKamey
Executive Director
Oregon Winegrowers Association