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March 30, 2023

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

RE: HB 3124 and the Bipartisan Drought Relief and Water Security Package

Chair Helm, Vice Chair Owens, and Committee Members,

Farmers Irrigation District (FID) is located in the lower Hood River Valley, serving nearly 6,000 acres of high value farmland with irrigation water and carbon free power. FID has spent the last 35 years modernizing the infrastructure serving our growers to make it as efficient as possible. This has largely been accomplished through piping open canals, installing fish screens, pressurizing deliveries, and installing remote monitoring (SCADA and telemetry) systems. This work has been expensive but, unlike most districts in the state, FID has been fortunate to have hydropower revenue to draw on to support our efforts. Our system is proof that investments in modernization have massive direct benefits to the communities we serve, the watershed we rely on, and in creating resilience in the face of climate change.

HB 3124 appears to be the vessel that will enable many of the components of the Bipartisan Drought Relief and Water Security Package. This bill will enable the State of Oregon to leverage massive federal investments in water infrastructure and is critical to the water future of Oregon. Investments in capacity for state agencies, data collection, convening of stakeholders, modernization of water infrastructure, planning functions, and other components will put the state on the path to lead the nation in managing water resources.

FID supports the framework of the Bipartisan Drought Relief and Water Security Package and the proposed components of HB 3124. We look forward to following the progress of this bill, and the other bills supporting the BiDRAWS framework.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Les Perkins', with a horizontal line extending to the right.

Les Perkins

General Manger