

House Bill 3112

Sponsored by Representatives OWENS, HELM (Pre-session filed.)

SUMMARY

The following summary is not prepared by the sponsors of the measure and is not a part of the body thereof subject to consideration by the Legislative Assembly. It is an editor's brief statement of the essential features of the measure as **introduced**. The statement includes a measure digest written in compliance with applicable readability standards.

Digest: The Act tells an agency to create a program for paying people to give up certain ground water rights. The Act gives money for the program. (Flesch Readability Score: 79.7).

Directs the Water Resources Commission to establish a program for compensating ground water right holders for voluntarily relinquishing all or portions of ground water rights in basins designated as critical ground water areas.

Appropriates moneys to the commission for the purpose of funding the program.

Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

A BILL FOR AN ACT

1
2 Relating to the voluntary relinquishment of water rights; and declaring an emergency.

3 **Be It Enacted by the People of the State of Oregon:**

4 **SECTION 1. (1) The Water Resources Commission shall establish a program for com-**
5 **pensating ground water right holders for voluntarily relinquishing all or a portion of the**
6 **holders' ground water rights in basins designated as critical ground water areas under ORS**
7 **537.730 to 537.740.**

8 **(2) The commission:**

9 **(a) May compensate a ground water right holder under the program for up to the ap-**
10 **praised market value of a relinquished ground water right or portion of a ground water right.**

11 **(b) Shall incentivize participation in the program, which promotes the repurposing of**
12 **ground water otherwise used for irrigated agriculture in order to reduce ground water use,**
13 **to provide measurable benefits to the environment, the economy or communities and to**
14 **minimize negative impacts of ground water use.**

15 **(c) Shall ensure that compensation under the program will:**

16 **(A) Result in measurable reductions in ground water use.**

17 **(B) Have a high likelihood of contributing to improved ground water conditions.**

18 **(3) The commission may accept moneys or grants from federal or other governmental**
19 **entities, or from private or other sources, to support the program.**

20 **SECTION 2. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appropri-**
21 **ated to the Water Resources Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2025, out of the**
22 **General Fund, the amount of \$____, which may be expended for establishing and funding**
23 **the program described in section 1 of this 2025 Act.**

24 **SECTION 3. This 2025 Act being necessary for the immediate preservation of the public**
25 **peace, health and safety, an emergency is declared to exist, and this 2025 Act takes effect**
26 **on its passage.**

27

NOTE: Matter in **boldfaced** type in an amended section is new; matter *[italic and bracketed]* is existing law to be omitted. New sections are in **boldfaced** type.