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February 10, 2025

Representative Ken Helm, Co-Chair  
Representative Mark Owens, Co-Chair  
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Support for HB 2169

Dear Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, and Members of the Committee:

As the municipal water and wastewater service provider in our community, the City of Corvallis strongly supports and urges your YES vote on House Bill (HB) 2169.

HB 2169 directs the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to continue its efforts, started under previous legislation, to address regulatory barriers, develop technical assistance resources, and implement a coordinated state program to support new and expanded water reuse opportunities, in consultation with other state agencies, municipal wastewater utilities, and other stakeholders. Like many other public wastewater utilities, the City of Corvallis looks for solutions to water quality challenges that provide the best fit in our community from a water quality compliance, sustainability, and economic standpoint, and that provide maximum benefits from public water infrastructure investments. The City of Corvallis is very interested in exploring water reuse opportunities as part of its long-term integrated water management strategy. However, current regulatory policies implemented by both DEQ and the Water Resources Department (WRD) make these opportunities seem out of reach.

HB 2169 is needed because Oregon's permitting requirements are decades old, and wastewater utilities have found the regulatory process to be difficult, and sometimes too complex and costly, to navigate. HB 2169 is also needed to cause improved coordination and collaboration among state agencies with the directive to implement the state's policies encouraging and supporting the development of reuse projects. DEQ and WRD historically have not had the resources or a sufficient mandate to work to resolve these issues. This has deterred utilities from pursuing the types of water quality compliance projects that have multiple environmental, community, and economic benefits. At the same time, publicly owned treatment facilities face new or increased permit requirements for things like temperature and nutrients.

Now is the time for Oregon to expand recycled water and other beneficial land application opportunities as part of the solution to water, climate, and economic challenges. Other states have modernized their rules to harness treated wastewater as a highly valuable



resource. Without passage of HB 2169--a continued mandate and funding for DEQ and other state agencies to tackle the work—recent efforts to update Oregon's recycled water regulatory framework and improve interagency coordination and collaboration cannot be sustained and Oregonians will not be able to fully realize the resource recovery values that beneficial reuse projects have to offer. Please enact HB 2169.

Sincerely,



Mark W. Shepard, P.E.  
*City Manager*

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Enclosure(s): 0

- C: Mark Shepard, City Manager (via email)
- Jeff Blaine, Public Works Director, (via email)
- Representative Sarah Finger McDonald - House District 16
- Tom Hubbard, Water utility Superintendent (via email)
- Rob Carlson, Wastewater Superintendent, (via email)
- Chad Marshall, Water Treatment Plant Supervisor (via email)
- Max Hildebrand, Wastewater Operations Supervisor (via email)

