



HB 3419
Testimony in Opposition
Before the
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
February 19, 2025

Co-Chairs Helm, Owens, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition of HB 3419.

The mission of the Oregon Ground Water Association is to promote sustainable groundwater development and management for maximum beneficial use without waste or contamination. Organized in 1949, the Association has sought to encourage responsible stewardship of the groundwater resource with its leadership in industry education and legislation.

The Oregon Ground Water Association (OGWA) is a nonprofit membership organization composed of water well constructors, well pump and water treatment contractors, hydrogeologists and engineers, manufacturers and suppliers of equipment, and other various trades engaged with the groundwater resource. From these various disciplines, we have the benefit of receiving many perspectives on proposed legislation.

The OGWA was surprised to see the -2 and -3 amendments would add undue burden to well users. Both sets of amendments propose to allow the Oregon Water Resources Department to require the installation of meters on domestic exempt use-water wells and reporting of water use at a cost ranging from \$1,500 to \$5,000 per well. Further, non-standardized meters can produce vastly different data. Because the property owner is not qualified to collect and interpret the data, specialists are needed to perform those tasks, creating additional costs. Exempt rural domestic uses account for less than 4 percent of the groundwater volume pumped in Oregon. Therefore, while the impact on those rural users will be significant, the value of the data gathered will be minimal.

If managing the water resource and protecting it is the goal, this legislation, as amended, misses the mark. Managing the information inflow and recording it will require more staff than the Department has available or can afford. With numerous proposals to increase fees already before the legislature, this is not the time to incur additional unnecessary costs.

The OGWA encourages the Committee to oppose HB 3419 in its current form with the proposed -2 and -3 amendments, and we thank you in advance for your careful consideration of the impact on your rural constituents.