

Submitter: Michael Heumann
On Behalf Of: Climate Action Team of Havurah Shalom
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB427

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 427 -- to safeguard streamflows in water right transfers.

As an avid Oregon outdoors enthusiast, I am writing to urge you to support and pass Senate Bill 427. The water in our streams is our state's lifeblood. It is a resource that belongs to all of us. It grows our salmon and our food, and it fuels our environment and our families. It ties us to our neighbors upstream and downstream.

Yet for far too long, an outdated loophole has allowed the Oregon Water Resources Department to approve applications for water right transfers without adequate consideration of whether the change will harm streamflows. Lower water levels in a stream can hurt fish, impair water quality, degrade our environment, and decrease scenic and recreation values.

Senate Bill 427 will help safeguard our streams—and the fish, water quality, environment, and scenic values they support—by ensuring voluntary water right changes won't further diminish streamflows. This narrow fix closes a dangerous loophole and brings modern environmental values into Oregon's outdated water right transfer review process.

I urge your support of SB 427 and the life-sustaining streamflows it will safeguard.

Sincerely,
Michael Heumann, MPH, MA