



Bend, Culver, La Pine, Madras, Maupin  
Metolius, Prineville, Redmond, Sisters & Central Oregon Counties

February 21, 2025  
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildlife  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court Street NE  
Salem, Oregon 97701

RE: Oppose SB 427

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, Senator Girod, Senator Prozanski, Senator Taylor:

We are writing to voice our opposition to Senate Bill 427 on behalf of Central Oregon Cities Organization. Our communities rely on the efficient management and transfer of water rights to ensure a secure water future. Senate Bill 427 will significantly slow this process, hindering water management flexibility for our cities, farms, ranches, and irrigation districts across the state.

Most of Oregon's surface water sources are fully appropriated, and new groundwater allocation rules further limit new water rights. The transfer process is essential for municipal and agricultural users to manage water use and secure additional supplies. Senate Bill 427 introduces a broad new standard requiring OWRD to determine if a transfer will result in "diminishment of streamflow," likely causing extensive delays and protests.

Oregon's legislature should enhance water right flexibility to improve operational efficiencies while protecting existing rights. Senate Bill 427 does the opposite.

We urge you to vote against Senate Bill 427 and look forward to future discussions on improving or updating Oregon's transfer process.

Sincerely,

A black ink signature of Ed Fitch, consisting of a large, sweeping 'E' followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

Ed Fitch  
COCO Chair – Redmond Mayer

A purple ink signature of Melanie Kebler, featuring a stylized 'M' and 'K' with a flowing tail.

Melanie Kebler  
COCO Vice-Chair – Bend Mayor

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Chair Ed Fitch  
Central Oregon Cities Organization  
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