

Submitter: Joseph Welch
On Behalf Of:
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 support Senate Bill 427 to safeguard streamflows in water right transfers.

For far too long, an outdated loophole in Oregon law has allowed the Oregon Water Resources Department to approve applications for water right transfers without adequate consideration of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, macro invertebrates, impair water quality, and decrease scenic and recreation values.

Senate Bill 427 safeguards our streams and all the life, water quality, 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 This narrow fix closes a dangerous loophole and brings modern environmental values into Oregon's outdated water right transfer review process.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. Without rivers we are nothing. They are life and provide so much more value when intact and protected.

Sincerely,

Joseph Welch