



Testimony by City of Wilsonville Mayor Shawn O'Neil Supporting HB 3700:

Lack of Trained Water and Wastewater Operators Demonstrates High Need for State Program to Certify Qualified Out-of-State Operators

Scheduled for public hearing on March 4, 2025, before the House Committee On Higher Education and Workforce Development

Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and Members of the Committee:

I am testifying on behalf of the City of Wilsonville in strong support of HB 3700, which permits the Environmental Quality Commission (EQC) to adopt rules to provide sewage treatment certification to individuals who are certified in another state and permits the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) to adopt rules to provide water-treatment certification to individuals who are certified in another state.

Wilsonville's Public Works Department has encountered challenges in recruiting, training, and retaining certified water and wastewater operations employees. In addition, projected statewide retirements of qualified staff over the next decade will exacerbate the problem for all operators of water and wastewater systems.

Providing clarity for out-of-state applicants on how their experience translates to Oregon's certification requirements will offer much-needed certainty in recruitment while maintaining high standards required to protect public health and the environment.

This bill is an important step toward a thorough conversation on reciprocity for drinking water and wastewater operators. I urge your support to help ensure Oregon's cities have access to a qualified workforce.

The City of Wilsonville appreciates your consideration and urges your support of HB 3700.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Shawn O'Neil", is positioned above the printed name and title.

Shawn O'Neil, Mayor
City of Wilsonville