



CONSOLIDATED OREGON INDIVISIBLE NETWORK

To: Senate Committee on Rules

From: Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN)

Re: IN SUPPORT OF SJR 28

Date: March 28, 2025

Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, Members of the Senate Committee on Rules:

I write to you today on behalf of the Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network, COIN, representing more than 50 local grassroots groups throughout the state. We strongly support SJR 28 and urge you to pass it.

The Oregon Constitution was written in 1857. The 60 delegates who wrote it and the People of the Oregon Territory who approved it had no concept of environmental pollution. We didn't really begin to understand the dangers of pollution until more than 100 years later, in the 1960s.

It's time to update our Constitution so that it better reflects our current needs.

Oregonians have long valued protecting their environment, and generally speaking, this State has done right by its citizens. But there have been some whopping failures.

One of those failures is in Morrow County, just up the Columbia River from where I live. For more than 30 years, state agencies have been aware of high levels of nitrates polluting the groundwater. And yet, during that time, nitrate levels have only increased, making it unsafe for hundreds of residents to drink water from their wells. Sadly, Morrow County residents are still years, if not decades, away from safe drinking water. How is this acceptable?

Clearly, Oregonians occasionally need *and deserve* to be able to demand better from their government.

SJR 28 will give voters the opportunity to enshrine our right to a healthy environment, a basic human necessity, into Oregon's Constitution. This amendment will help prevent harm before it happens, saving money and saving lives.

Respectfully,

Deborah Ferrer, The Dalles

on behalf of the Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network (COIN)

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