

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

My name is Darin G. Henry, and I live in Eugene, Oregon.

I am writing in strong support of **SB 1154**, which updates Oregon's Groundwater Quality Protection Act. This legislation is essential to safeguarding the health, economic well being, and environmental integrity of our state.

As national environmental protections face rollbacks—particularly under Project 2025 and the influence of MAGA-aligned agendas—it is more important than ever for Oregon to act decisively to protect its own land, water, and people. Our state must not be left vulnerable to weakened federal oversight. We have a responsibility to lead, and SB 1154 is a critical step in doing so.

Clean water is fundamental to public health, thriving ecosystems, and a resilient economy.

When groundwater is contaminated—whether by nitrates from industrial agriculture, leaking septic systems, or chemical runoff—Oregonians pay the price with their health and livelihoods. Contaminated wells have already affected communities across the state, especially in rural areas such as Morrow and Umatilla counties, where nitrate pollution has made some drinking water unsafe (Oregon Capital Chronicle, 2023).

This isn't just an environmental issue—it's an **economic one**.

When Oregonians get sick from preventable contamination, health care costs rise, productivity drops, and the long-term economic burden on families and the state grows. A healthy population is essential for a strong economy. Groundwater contamination also threatens our agricultural economy, fisheries, and the outdoor recreation industry—cornerstones of Oregon's rural and urban communities alike.

Polluters must be held accountable.

We cannot allow short-term profit for a few to outweigh the long-term health and prosperity of the many. The corporations and practices contaminating Oregon's groundwater must be part of the solution—not above the law.

Updating Oregon's Groundwater Quality Protection Act is not just about accountability; it's about **justice for communities currently drinking poisoned water**

and about **preventing harm to future generations**. SB 1154 lays the groundwork for action, transparency, and real solutions.

Thank you for your leadership and for supporting SB 1154. Let's ensure that all Oregonians—urban and rural—have access to clean, safe drinking water.

Sincerely,

Darin G. Henry

Eugene, Oregon 97405