

Submitter: Anna Lueck
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

April 15, 2025

To: Joint Committee on Ways & Means
Subject: Support for \$4 Million in Water Equity Funding

Co-Chairs Senator Kate Lieber and Representative Tawna Sanchez, Co-Vice Chair Senator Fred Girod, Representatives David Gomberg and Greg Smith, and members of the committee,

My name is Anna Lueck. As a filmmaker who works regularly with environmental, conservation, and Tribal groups, I know there are a lot of people doing incredible work to study, repair, and support community engagement with our waterways-- and I also know that these people and organizations are often under-resourced and overworked. HB 3528 as it is a critical step in supporting these essential research and advocacy efforts that safeguard Oregon's water, for all Oregonians.

Water underpins every aspect of our lives in Oregon, but we take it for granted until there is a problem. As a filmmaker and storyteller, I have seen this time and time again in communities across the region. From tribal disconnection from ancestral rivers in Eastern Oregon to confusion and fear surrounding the CEI Hub and Superfund-polluted Willamette River in Portland, Oregon waterways have people who care about them. But most people don't know where to get help or more information about water issues they face. On a personal level, I have faced exceedingly high water bills and have felt unsupported by the city in getting more information about why this increase is needed and if there are any resources for individuals who can't afford it. Despite loving water and seeking out information about it, I have often felt disempowered when it comes to understanding water issues and knowing how to take action within my community to make it better.

This is why I support this funding: because it provides communities with the tools they need to understand their own water resources, advocate for them, and build everything from emergency preparedness skills to advocacy skills. We especially need to fund this in low income, rural, and/or Tribal communities that have historically been excluded, though they are the most affected (and therefore knowledgeable about what needs to change). And because we all rely on this threatened resource, improvements made in any one community will benefit us all.

Oregon's water systems are under increasing pressure due to aging infrastructure,

climate change, and long-standing underinvestment. These challenges disproportionately impact communities—tribal nations, rural areas, low-income families, and communities of color—who often lack the resources to address water crises effectively.

HB 3528 provides \$4 million in funding to support much-needed research and grants: \$3.2 million to the University of Oregon for research and grants that help communities address water challenges.

\$800,000 to Portland State University's Institute for Tribal Governments to support tribal-led water solutions.

By passing HB 3528, the Legislature will help ensure that all Oregonians, especially those most impacted, have access to clean and reliable water. This is an investment in health, safety, and resilience for our communities today and for future generations.

I urge you to support HB 3528 and continue investing in water equity for all Oregonians, ensuring that Oregon remains a leader in environmental protection and climate solutions work.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,
Anna Lueck
Portland Resident & Filmmaker