



SPRINGFIELD UTILITY BOARD

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February 4, 2026

Co-Chairs Helm & Owens
House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water Committees
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Creation of Water Professionals Appreciation Week and Support of House Bill 4005

Springfield Utility Board supports House Bill 4005 and the creation of Water Professionals Appreciation Week, which is broadly supported across Oregon's water sector and recognizes the essential work of water professionals. The League of Oregon Cities, the Special Districts Association of Oregon, the Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies, WateReuse Pacific Northwest, the Oregon Water Utility Council, and the Oregon Association of Water Utilities all recognize and celebrate the essential work performed by water professionals.

HB 4005 establishes Water Professionals Appreciation Week in October, recognizing the vital role water professionals play in protecting public health, the economy, and the environment. This recognition is both timely and appropriate given the scale, complexity, and responsibility associated with delivering safe drinking water across Oregon.

Water is foundational to Oregon's communities and economy. The reliable delivery of public drinking water is essential to protecting public health, supporting community growth, ensuring livability, and enabling critical public safety services, including fire protection.

Oregon's water professionals operate and maintain systems that meet some of the most stringent water quality standards in the nation. Through advanced treatment processes, careful system management, and continuous monitoring, these professionals ensure that drinking water from public water systems is filtered, cleaned, tested, and distributed under the supervision of operators certified by the Oregon Health Authority.

Water professionals steward Oregon's natural resources by balancing community needs with environmental protection, conservation, and watershed resilience.

HB 4005 also serves an important public education and workforce awareness purpose by helping Oregonians better understand the important functions water utilities perform. The designation further encourages Oregonians to learn about careers in the water and wastewater industries and consider entering this critical public service field.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeff Nelson, General Manager