

Submitter: Laurie OConnor
On Behalf Of: Self and neighbors
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4049

Please do not support HB 4049. Once again the commercial water users (irrigators) are looking to undermine the 512 Rules and oversight by OWRD in order to expand their operations and further harm the aquifers within the Harney Basin. This bill has vague language, especially related to voluntary agreements and transfers. While I am totally in favor of defining and utilizing transfers in order to ACTUALLY reduce water pumpage, this arrangement must be carefully implemented with a priority toward water stability throughout the Basin. HB 4049 seeks to offer more leniency on transfers and timelines, which may cover as voluntary reductions while serving as reapplied optimal pumpage. This will do nothing to stabilize aquifers across the Basin. Muddying the water once again will not result in effective progress toward stability. Residential and stock well owners are NOT being heard or represented by actions these advocates are presenting.

Please vote No on HB 4049. Please support the known science and give the Division 512 Rules to guide us forward with OWRD oversight, as the Oregon Water Commission voted to support. Work with OWRD, with the Governor's office, and within Division 512 Rules to improve voluntary agreements.