

FROM THE DESK OF  
REPRESENTATIVE  
CAROLYN TOMEI



*Carolyn Tomei*

## OCN urges a YES vote on SB 5547

This year, the Oregon Conservation Network chose a bill that would increase funding for the Oregon Water Resources Department as a Priority for a Healthy Oregon. We are proud to join stakeholders from across the political spectrum in support of SB 5547, the agency's budget bill, which includes a 3.7% increase in funding from the current biennium. It also maintains the current water rights cost share program of 50% fees and General Fund.

We urge your support of the Oregon Water Resources Department budget – along with a fee renewal bill, HB 2259 – because it will restore crucial positions that aid the agency in its mission to serve the public by practicing and promoting responsible water management through two key goals: to directly address Oregon's water supply needs, and to restore and protect streamflows and watersheds in order to ensure the long-term sustainability of Oregon's ecosystems, economy, and quality of life.



Oregon began this session with its first statewide water plan, the Integrated Water Resources Strategy, and this budget allows that balanced approach to move forward. Further, responsibly managing Oregon's waters helps ensure a legacy of healthy rivers for everyone and everything that is sustained by our waterways, including fish, birds, aquatic species, water users, and all Oregonians who depend on healthy stream flows and water supplies.

From stream to ocean, from farm to table, water is crucial to life both now and in the future. As we face a future with more people and less water, it is imperative that we do all we can to protect this vital resource. We believe that even more funding is necessary to fulfill the agency's mission and meet our obligation to the public interest, but SB 5547 is a critical next step.

**Thank you for voting YES on SB 5547.**



OCN is coordinated by the Oregon League of Conservation Voters and powered by the tens of thousands of Oregonians who belong to OCN's member organizations. Together, we pass pro-conservation laws, protect our unique quality of life, and ensure a better Oregon for our children. Contact Christy Splitt at 971.404.7279 or [christy@olcv.org](mailto:christy@olcv.org) or visit [www.forahealthyoregon.org](http://www.forahealthyoregon.org) for more information.

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