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March 11, 2019

Re: Public Testimony Safe Water Act of 2019 - HB 2656

Dear Energy and Environment Committee Members:

Please vote YES on HB 2656. I live in Arch Cape on the North Oregon Coast with my partner Nadia and our 3-year-old child. We own 20 acres of forestland within our local drinking watershed. Last year we completed a 10 acre thin of the property. By not clear-cutting, keeping a 100 feet no-cut buffer from the drinking water stream, and forgoing pesticides, we maintained the integrity of the stream banks and the quality of our community's drinking water. Our very small thinning operation grossed over \$80,000.

The timber industry will likely argue that HB 2656 will do irreparable economic harm to them. Please don't be fooled. While HB 2656 may affect their short-term profits, the timber owners will still make millions of dollars sustainably harvesting from our drinking watersheds. More importantly, our coastal communities will not suffer great economic losses and unnecessary public health costs from their rampant clear cutting and pesticide use.

Human health impacts of current forest practices are unacceptable. The drinking water for our coastal communities routinely have high levels of known carcinogens, trihalomethanes and haloacetic acids. These high levels are caused when excess sediment that enters public drinking waters from logging roads and inadequate riparian buffers reacts with disinfectants required to treat the water. Over time, some people who drink water containing trihalomethanes in excess of the Safe Drinking Water Act ("SDWA") maximum contaminant level ("MCL") experience problems with their liver, kidneys, or central nervous system, and have an increased risk of getting cancer.

To make matters worse, Oregon's protections from pesticide use near drinking water streams are woefully inadequate and the worst on the West Coast. To my knowledge, no agency had ever tested our waters after a spray until citizens of Rockaway Beach demanded that DEQ test. DEQ's preliminary test results of their drinking water source, Jetty Creek, came back positive for glyphosate. Glyphosate is a known carcinogenic regularly sprayed by timber companies.

Financial impacts of current forest practices continue to harm our communities.

In order to meet federal drinking standards, both Arch Cape Water District and the City of Rockaway Beach were more or less forced to build and install expensive membrane treatment plants with sand filtration. The cost of Rockaway Beach's new plant and filters totaled \$1.5 million. Subsequently, water bills for these two communities are much higher than the average water rate, with Arch Cape water costing residents \$53.00 each month. Replacing filters, and running and maintaining these plants is not cheap. The costs will not go down until the extra treatment is no longer needed. Under the Current Forest Practices Act, the extra treatment will always be needed.

It is time for the Legislature to revise the Forest Practices Act. The Oregon Forest Practices Act was adopted in 1971. We have learned a great deal about the correlation between clean water and timber practices since then. The time has come for Oregon to revise this law to better reflect the science and understanding of this new millennium. We live in one of the most beautiful places in the world, but what good is that if my three year old can't get a clean glass of water from the tap? For the health of our streams and the health of our communities that depend on these streams for nourishment, please vote yes on HB 2656.

Sincerely,
/s/ Michael Manzulli
Michael Manzulli