



*Working with community wastewater treatment and stormwater management agencies  
across the state to protect Oregon's water quality since 1987.*

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March 9, 2021

Representative Helm, Chair  
Members of the House Water Committee

**Subject: HB 2310 – Local control of pipe materials for water projects**

Chair Helm and Members of the House Water Committee:

The Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies (ACWA) appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony in opposition to HB 2310, which would prohibit local governments from adopting specifications for pipe materials during the design phase in water projects when state funds are used. ACWA also strongly opposes the -1 amendments, which would unnecessarily require local governments to post certain notices, studies, and justifications regarding pipe materials selection for local water projects.

ACWA is a private, not-for-profit organization of Oregon's wastewater treatment and stormwater management agencies and the professional consulting firms that serve them. ACWA's members across the state provide wastewater and stormwater management services to over 2.5 million Oregonians, serving about 70% of Oregon's businesses and homes. Our members plan, design, construct and operate millions of dollars of public infrastructure annually to efficiently, effectively and safely provide these critical urban services.

Each Oregon community has a unique set of needs and circumstances that must be taken into account by the professional engineers who design water and wastewater systems. Pipe materials are selected based on considerations such as compatibility with the existing water system, seismic resilience, soil compatibility, resistance to corrosion, and ease of maintenance. Technical decisions related to pipes and other materials should be made by licensed engineers and local communities and should be based on the unique nature of individual water systems. As professionals, these engineers become aware of new pipe materials through professional contacts and continuing education, as required to maintain their engineering registration; new types of pipes are continually being tested and used throughout the state.

Imposing new materials mandates not only interferes with sound engineering judgment, but also with the ability of communities to manage their systems as efficiently as possible. Communities need to remain free to adopt system-wide best management practices and uniform specifications in the development and maintenance of their water systems to maximize efficiency and control costs. The proposed amendment would create an administrative burden for utilities with no benefit to the public, thereby reducing, rather than increasing, efficiency. The proposed amendments could also lead to a lack of standardization for maintenance and repair, reducing efficiency and driving up costs. Both the

original and amended versions of this legislation would likely lead to a significant increase in bid protests and litigation over pipe selection on public projects, thereby delaying projects and wasting limited public resources.

ACWA supports the ability of each utility and community to be able to choose the best materials to serve their customers and protect public investment in clean and safe water. Therefore, we urge you to oppose HB 2310 and the -1 amendment.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Susan L. Smith".

Susan L. Smith  
Executive Director