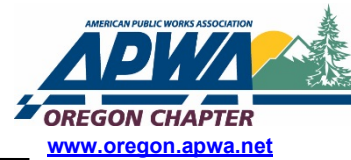


American Public Works Association

Your Comprehensive Public Works Resource



March 9, 2021

Chair Helm and Members of the House Water Committee:

The Oregon Chapter of the American Public Works Association (APWA) opposes HB 2310, as amended, which prohibits local governments from adopting specifications for pipe materials during certain phases of state-funded water projects. APWA represents public works officials and professionals who share a strong commitment to providing and maintaining clean and reliable water and wastewater systems. The local and state agencies, public works professionals, and engineers we represent take this responsibility very seriously, as we have an obligation to protect public health, to use limited public resources in the most efficient manner possible, and to promote economic development.

HB 2310 could prohibit local governments from selecting the best materials for their water systems when state funds were used in their project. The bill is presented as a way to ensure the public receives the best value, but the marketplace for pipes and related materials is already open and competitive, so such measures are not necessary. More importantly, technical decisions on materials for our public infrastructure should be made by the professionals tasked with designing, building, and maintaining these systems based on what is best for the needs of each system. These decisions should be based on the unique needs of each system, considering critical factors such as structural integrity, soil compatibility, maintenance, and life cycle costs. While certain material may appear to be a better option based on initial acquisition cost, it may be more expensive to install and may lead to increased maintenance and replacement costs in the future if that material is not suitable for the project conditions. This could result in higher life-cycle costs for the project, environmental damage, or other adverse effects.

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 should 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, rather than being forced to comply with unnecessary regulations.

On behalf of the thousands of professionals who design, construct, and manage water systems in Oregon; and the public served by them, we respectfully urge you to oppose HB 2310 as amended.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Tony Roos'.

Tony Roos, PE
APWA Oregon President

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