

Thank you representatives Owens and Levy for introducing HB 3228. My name is Pat Sharp. I am a landowner in the Harney Basin, a board member on the Harney County Watershed Council, and I have participated on the Harney County Community Based Water Collaborative since its inception in 2016. I am voicing my support of HB3228 as private citizen Pat Sharp. The overallocation of groundwater in Harney County did not happen overnight. It took years of mismanagement! And sadly, unsustainable reductions in groundwater levels are not unique to our county, but will negatively impact communities throughout Oregon into the future. The solutions to reduce groundwater use in our water basins statewide must be innovative and varied. If we rely solely on our priority date appropriations, "first in time, first in line," the impacts to Oregon communities, especially Oregon's rural communities will be economically, environmentally and socially devastating. Our state must develop a tool box of solutions to address declining groundwater levels and mitigate community impact. HB 3228 gives communities an opportunity to voluntarily participate in a variety of alternative water management plans with the ultimate goal of reducing groundwater use while cooperating to maintain vital and healthy communities.