

**Testimony to the House Committee on Water  
on House Bill 3293**

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance innovative, collaborative and equitable solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council supports the community inclusivity goals of HB 3293.

We deem it essential that local communities be actively engaged in water project decision-making processes. Authorizing the water project funder to make financial support available to local organizations and local governments will help ensure that there are sufficient resources to cover outreach efforts.

OEC appreciates that HB 3292 allows funding to be contingent on best practices for community involvement being used in the development and implementation of community engagement plans. There are many excellent resources available for establishing rules for best practices to ensure inclusivity and increase the participation of disproportionately affected communities. We encourage the providers to heed the recommendations of the Environmental Justice Task Force as they are coordinating to establish their list of best practices.

It is, of course, essential that a voice for the environment be included in the list of those participating in the planning and decision-making processes addressed under this bill. During the rulemaking process, OWRD should identify and clarify the means for including that voice as part of the list of best practices.

OEC urges the Committee to vote yes on HB 3293 to ensure that local voices, including environmental voices, are part of planning and decision-making for water projects funded through state agencies.