



The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 101-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

March 31, 2021

To: [House Committee On Energy and Environment](#)
Rep. Pam Marsh, Chair
Rep. Ken Helm and Rep. Zach Hudson, Vice-Chairs
Members of the Subcommittee

Re: **HB 2143** – Updating Hydroelectric Project Fees for DEQ, WRD and ODFW – **Support**

The League has strong positions on both water quality and quantity. We have studied water issues since 1969. We had a seat on the original Integrated Water Resources Strategy Policy Advisory Group and the latest update work. The League also has studied issues around seismic risks, adopting a position in March of 1995 that includes acknowledging the responsibility of government to evaluate dams “...*that threaten population centers and taking remedial actions such as reinforcing dams, and developing maps and downstream notification procedures.*” “*Priority must be given to mitigation that protects human life and safeguards critical life support systems.*”

HB 2143 will update fees for hydroelectric projects in order to provide the necessary staffing to process and review applications for certification, to assure processing of permits, licenses and water right certificates and to monitor and enforce issues around those project permits as needed. **Each of the three agencies who will receive monies from these fees (DEQ, WRD and ODFW) anticipate budgetary shortfalls in the coming biennia, with DEQ already underfunded. Without these fee increases (not addressed since 1999), Oregonians will see reduced protection of public health and safety as well as protection of aquatic life related to hydroelectric dams.**

We understand that there are approximately 160 active projects. The agencies are directed to promote the public benefits of hydropower while minimizing the public costs, to protect Oregon's natural resources, to protect the health and safety of Oregonians, to participate in any local, state, or federal proceedings related to hydroelectric power development and to provide recommendations on and ensure compliance with state and federal laws. These responsibilities require reasonable staffing to accomplish those tasks.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation. **We ask that you PASS this legislation to Ways and Means without the posted -1 amendment so these agencies can have the sufficient funding to do their missions as required by the legislature and by state and federal laws and rules.**

Rebecca Gladstone
LWVOR President

Peggy Lynch
LWVOR Natural Resources Coordinator