



284 E Water St, Stayton, OR 97383

1/25/2020

**To:** Chair Jeff Golden, Vice-Chair Dallas Heard, and Members of the Senate Natural Resources and Wildlife Recovery Committee

**RE:** Testimony in Support of SB 130, Extension of District Temporary Transfer Pilot Program

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Heard, and Members of the Committee:

The Santiam Water Control District (SWCD) is testifying in support of SB 130. The Pilot Process has been critical in allowing our District to transfer water rights in a method that reduces the cost and burden on our landowners, while improving water management. We urge your support of this Bill.

SWCD provides irrigation water to over 17,000 acres in the Stayton, Aumsville, and South Salem areas. The pilot transfer program allows 15 districts including ours to simplify the process of transferring water rights under a controlled pilot that is now clearly demonstrating multiple benefits. We have utilized the program to annually transfer approximately 375 acres, involving 20-30 tax lots. The program is of particular benefit to financially struggling farmers and landowners that would otherwise be subject to expensive transfer fees and regulatory burden.

The program benefits our community by:

- lowering costs and simplifying process
- provides stability, allowing the district to better manage, use, and protect water rights within its purview.
- Aids the Water Resources Dept, and their on the ground Watermasters. The process provides clear notice and involvement of local OWRD staff getting them information in the format most useful to them, while not creating an overwhelming pile of administrative paperwork at the state administrative office.

Thank you for your consideration and support

*Brent Stevenson*

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Brent Stevenson, District Manager Santiam Water Control District