



February 1, 2023

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

From: The Wetlands Conservancy

RE: Support for HB 2813 - Ensuring Safe and Secure Drinking Water

Chair Helm and Committee Members,

The Wetlands Conservancy (TWC) is a 41-year-old, statewide land trust dedicated to the preservation of Oregon's wetlands in partnership with communities. Water quality and water quantity is at the core of all our work. TWC owns and stewards over 1500 acres of high-quality wetland habitat throughout the state of Oregon and provides expertise on wetland restoration projects across the state. We know that wetlands are a vital piece of a climate resilient landscape.

I am writing today in support of HB 2813, a bipartisan bill that would help ensure secure and safe drinking water for communities in Oregon. HB 2813 would help communities and water suppliers secure plentiful drinking water, increase resilience to climate change, and provide a state funding source to protect water resources and public health.

We know that all of our drinking water comes from a source - a lake, river, stream or aquifer - and the best way to protect drinking water is to make sure its source is protected. With our boots in the wetlands for over 40 years, we have seen the impacts of continued wetland degradation on our water table and over all water aquifers. Challenges accessing clean and reliable water will become more complex as built infrastructure ages, climate change and wildfire add uncertainty, and tourism stresses water supplies on the Oregon coast in the summer.

HB 2813 is a bipartisan bill to help communities and water suppliers secure plentiful drinking water, increase resilience to climate change, and provide state funding to match and leverage private and federal funding to protect water resources and public health. HB 2813 will provide meaningful support for many communities facing water insecurity and will help leverage unprecedented federal funding coming down to our state. We encourage Chair Helm and the committee members to support this bill and appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Ryan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Katie Ryan
Executive Director