

**Oregon State Legislature
2023 Regular Session**

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources & Water
Public Hearing for HB3231

March 3, 2023

Legislators,

I'm writing today to support HB3231 as an opportunity to allow cities to work cooperatively with farmers and irrigators to maximize our highly valuable water resources in an environmentally beneficial way.

Hermiston is, at its core, an agriculturally based community, surrounded by thousands of acres of some of the most fertile farmland in the world. That is, if there is water to support the crops. As such, the growers in our region have become world leaders in the practice of precision irrigation and are capable of truly incredible things to maximize every drop of this precious resource.

Meanwhile, the Hermiston community has continued to flourish over the decades to expand and diversify our local economy in a way that continues to attract new residents and investment to Oregon. This growing bright spot in Oregon's arid eastern region is nestled next to the Umatilla River, which provides many benefits to the region, including playing a critical role in regional salmon habitat. I am very proud to say that, as a result of many years of work and partnership, Hermiston has been successfully re-using our community's water for the benefit of both agriculture and local fish habitat for nearly 9 years.

Hermiston struggled with the challenges of temperature discharges in to the salmon-bearing Umatilla River for many years. Through the hard work and dedication of many partners, Hermiston was able to begin processing our effluent to Class-A recycled water in late 2014 with the activation of our \$27 million treatment plant upgrade. We are now able to divert all of our 1.2 million gallons of recycled water per day to the West Extension Irrigation District during the hot irrigation season. This helps farmers grow our local economy while protecting fish and improving water quality in the Umatilla River.

It is my hope that HB3231 will allow other communities across our state to follow our lead.

Sincerely,

Dr. Dave Drotzmann
Mayor of Hermiston



Office of the Mayor
DR. DAVID DROTZMANN