

**Testimony to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means  
Subcommittee on Natural Resources  
On HB 4057**

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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.

OEC strongly supports including full funding for Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Agricultural Water Quality Program and the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program in HB 5002.

**Agricultural Water Quality Program**

OEC has worked closely with the Department for many years on both water quality and pesticide management. We know that the Department's ability to fully deliver on its charge to manage non-point water pollution associated with agricultural lands and to ensure that pesticides do not enter our rivers, lakes and streams is constrained by lack of adequate funding. We are asking that you fully fund the work of the Agricultural Water Quality Program and the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership program at the levels laid out in [ODA's Agency Request Budget](#).

ODA POP 320 requested \$1,633,800 in lottery funds to support two additional NRS4 statewide staff specialist positions and five additional NRS3 regional water quality staff positions. As laid out in the ODA ARB, the agency is charged to "participate in, develop, implement, report on, and adapt to the surface and groundwater water quality concerns identified by DEQ processes; improve compliance response; enhance collaborative partner efforts; increase education/outreach with agricultural landowners, operators; expand engagement with a range of interest groups, and increase capacity to address local and regional water quality issues." The current staff level of approximately 15 people is not sufficient to provide this level of service to Oregonians. With increasing water quality challenges posed in rural areas and on agricultural lands by drought, wildfire, climate change and some agricultural activities, we need this program to be staffed up. Unfortunately, POP 320 was not included in the Governor's Recommended Budget GRB).

**Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program (PSP)**

OEC was a pivotal partner in the development of legislation establishing the PSP as well as the subsequent rulemakings and implementation of the program.

As laid out in the GRB, "the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program provides funding for pesticide monitoring in selected watersheds and collaborative work with

pesticide users in the watersheds when water quality concerns are identified. The program coordinator administers grants to local organizations for monitoring, outreach and education, and pesticide collection events. Pesticide collection events sponsored by the program have been enormously successful, retiring thousands of pounds of current and legacy pesticides and providing for their safe disposal.”

Continuing support for this program is an essential part of managing water quality across the state. Working collaboratively with producers and urban pesticide users to improve practices and reduce pesticide pollution complements the enforcement side of ODA’s pesticide management work. Unfortunately, while the GRB did include funding for the PSP, the agency’s required 15% reduction option list included the funding for Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program (\$1,204,173 GR & \$1,204,174 OF).

OEC urges you to include full funding for ODA POP 320 in HB 5002 as well as support for the Pesticide Stewardship Partnership Program.