

**Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources and Water
On HB 2929-2**

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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 HB 2929-2. At a time when Oregon's surface and groundwater resources are overallocated and rainfall patterns are fluctuating wildly we cannot afford to allow illegal use of water – period. The recent Secretary of State Report on water acknowledges this, closing with a specific directive to support the regulatory efforts of state in our work to ensure water equity and security are deeply embedded in our state's water future.

Farmers, rural and urban communities, fish and wildlife, and the ecosystems that support them are all harmed by those who refuse to comply with our state's water laws. Allowing the Department of Water Resources (OWRD) to employ the tool of injunctive relief to enforce against illegal water use provides one more way for the Department to protect this public resource.

Only the Department would be allowed to use this tool; third parties could not. Injunctive relief would be a tool of (almost) last resort, invoked only when the person illegally using water refuses to stop their illegal water use.

Supporting HB 2929-2 gives OWRD another tool for managing Oregon's water resources in the best interest of fish, farms and families. OEC urges you to support HB 2929-2 and move it forward.