

Submitter: Scott Fein
On Behalf Of: Jackson County Surveyor
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources
Measure: HB3187

The goal of the bill is to allow an irrigation district employee of 7 years of experience become a certified water rights examiner without the required prerequisite license under ORS 672.

Currently a certified water rights examiner must first be a surveyor, engineer, or geologist licensed with the state under ORS 672 and pass a subsequent exam to get licensed as a certified water rights examiner under ORS 537.

With as many disputes as I have seen over real property and water rights, ensuring the properly trained and licensed professional doing the water rights examination work is imperative. The mapping science of water rights is deeply rooted in surveying and land title which is why a prerequisite license under ORS 672 is required. As land is continued to be divided in this state and drought is upon us continuously; it is imperative to keep the appropriate licensed professional standards in place to qualify as a certified water rights examiner.

Eroding the credentialing laws of the surveying and engineering professions in the form of certified water rights examiner standards is contrary to the public interest of real property and water rights. Standards exist for a reason, great societies have historically crumbled when standards are eroded.

Furthermore irrigation districts can currently perform all water rights examination functions of a certified water rights examiner within a district based on their district authority under ORS 545. There is no reason to pass this bill on behalf of an irrigation district unless certain irrigation district employees want to be a certified water rights examiner for non district purposes. This bill will lead to public harm by allowing the substandard individual to become licensed.

Please do not pass this bill.

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Jackson County Surveyor