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Friday, April 14, 2023

Senate Committee on Natural Resources
Chair Senator Jeff Golden

Honorable Chair and Committee Members

As a practicing professional that includes Water Right Examiner work, I have concerns on this proposed bill. My firm Located in Lakeview, Oregon, employs 7 staff and we provide engineering and Surveying services to Eastern and Southern Oregon. Our Work Also includes water rights.

Our firm is also a member of ACEC Oregon, which also is opposing the bill. In addition, I also own a ranch with various water rights, so I understand the issues.

This bill allows Irrigation/ Water District employees to qualify for a Water Right Examiner License with only experience of working for the district. Currently licensing is required as an Engineer, Surveyor, or Geologist. This insures a technical background. This bill does not cover many of our concerns as noted below:

1. Technical experience is not defined. This could be anyone from the district
2. Mapping skills and other technical skills are required for a Water Right Examiner, that is why the current Statute requires prior registration. This is not defined.
3. There is no mention of if the person becomes licensed if they leave the district then they will be offering services to the public without training in mapping, surveying, or hydraulic issues.
4. It is taking another provision away from registered professionals who worked for this privilege.
5. There is water right examiners available. My firm does water rights as I know many other firms do also.
6. There is nothing keeping districts from offering their services to others if they have a person licensed on the district staff. The districts would be in direct competition with private firms, which will affect especially small firms in our eastern part of the state.
7. Water rights are important. Final Claims of beneficial use, and transfers of rights need to be reviewed and mapped correctly. My firm is currently working on a water right in Lake County that was mapped incorrectly.

Please consider these concerns when discussing this bill.

Sincerely

Darryl Anderson PE PLS CWRE