



April 25, 2023

Senator Jeff Golden, Chair
Senator Fred Girod, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources

Re: HB 2929, Support

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Girod, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing in support of injunctive authority to stop illegal water use as proposed in HB 2929.

This is a common-sense proposal that would permit our regulators to protect Oregon farmers, ranchers, livestock, and wildlife from the harm of illegal water theft.

Water may be the most precious commodity in Southern Oregon; willful waste, diversion, and illegal use of water is unacceptable.

As a bee habitat conservationist, my organization has lost thousands of dollars directly through seed that was planted, then unable to be irrigated due to mysterious disappearance of water resources. Indirectly we have wasted thousands more on staff time, monitoring equipment, and lab costs for projects that were halted and cancelled due to lack of water on Southern Oregon pastures. Our farming and ranching partners had full water rights, but empty streams and canals as a result of surface and irrigation water disappearance.

During my tenure as President of the Northwest Farmers Union, and Board Member on the National Farmers Union I had the opportunity to write, review, and lobby for good farming and ranching policy on both national and local levels. I clearly recognize HB 2929 as good policy that will protect our ag community and the landscapes they steward, while halting the illegal activities of bad actors.

The Oregon Water Resources Department needs the authority to act now, without waiting for a lengthy legal process to play out while precious waterways are siphoned away.

Sincerely,

Sarah Red-Laird
Executive Program Director
The Bee Girl Organization
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