Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese Iverson and Kropf and members of the House Rules Committee,

My name is Joe Spendolini. I am the Chairman of the South Suburban Sanitary District (SSSD) board of directors. We are an Oregon Special District situated within the Urban Growth Boundary just outside the city of Klamath Falls.

It is an incredible honor for me to sit here before you all and testify in support of HB 2765 and the – 2 amendment, and I thank you for this opportunity.

Our District was formed in 1957, currently serves about 23,000 citizens, treats and discharges about 1.5 million gallons of wastewater each day from over 7,000 service connections.

HB 2765 and the -2 amendment is a collaborative, innovative concept that, in the end, will deliver balanced benefits to the citizens of Klamath, some irrigators, a Native American Tribe, the Lower Klamath Wildlife Refuge and the wildlife that rely on the habitat when water is available.

To comply with new regulations our plant has to be significantly upgraded. According to engineers at West Yost and Associates, these upgrades are estimated to cost approximately $75 million. Once complete, the water we treat will be at least reuse quality.

The SSSD board of directors voted unanimously to utilize that reuse quality water to help repair some of the damage caused by the severe multi year drought by piping our discharge to a drainage district down stream of our facility, whose infrastructure is connected to the Lower Klamath Wildlife Refuge.

According to West Yost and Associates, conveying our discharge through a pipeline to the reuse target area heavily impacted by the severe multi-year drought, would cost about $20 million. The concept laid out in HB 2765 saves not just the $20 million for that pipeline but will not require any additional infrastructure to achieve our goal of getting water to the Lower Klamath Wildlife Refuge as detailed in the -2 amendment, because we will utilize infrastructure already in place.

HB 2765 and the -2 amendment is a collaborative product intended to assist our district and community respond to both a financial and environmental crisis.

I am very pleased and honored to be able report to you all that HB 2765 and the -2 amendment is supported by a very broad coalition of individuals and organizations in and around our community including: The Board of County Commissioners, the City of Klamath Falls, the Klamath County Chamber of Commerce, Klamath Basin Audubon Society, the Modoc Nation, citizens in and outside the district, Klamath Drainage District, Klamath Irrigation District, Klamath Water Users Association, Oregon Water Resources Congress, California Waterfowl Association, and many other individuals from Chiloquin, Grants Pass, Weed CA, and others that live outside of our community but frequently visit the areas impacted by the drought.

I am so very proud of the way broad interests within our community have joined together in support of this bill and the -2 amendment with the goal of assisting each other in addressing significant problems we're being forced to deal with. To me, this is a model for community based problem solving with historically divisive issues. We meet together, we discuss together, we negotiate together, we solve problems together, we live harmoniously – together.

Though not a magic bullet, HB 2765 and the -2 amendment is a holistic approach that would help offset SOME of the terrible impacts to our community and the wildlife refuge caused by the severe multi-year drought.

I think it's important to note that there's no fiscal component to HB 2765 or the -2 amendment. This happens to be one of those very unusual opportunities for us to work together to help solve very serious problems simply by giving permission, instead of money. No appropriations needed. Quite the opposite, this will actually reduce the cost of mitigating drought damage by eliminating $20 million for a pipeline.

I respectfully encourage you to vote YES on HB 2765 and the -2 amendment.

Again, thank you very much for the time and attention you've given me.