

June 13, 2025

From the desk of Representative Ken Helm, H-490



**A broad coalition of communities, associations, and environmental groups support HB 2947 to fund Oregon State University to study the effects of PFAS in land-applied biosolids on soils, water, and agricultural crops in Oregon**

Organizations that provide critical water quality services and work to protect public health, safety, and the environment in communities across Oregon applaud the bipartisan support for HB 2947 that resulted in its unanimous passage by the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water, and the Natural Resources Subcommittee of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means.

HB 2947 will help fund the Oregon State University (OSU) to study the effects of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in land applied biosolids on soil, water, and agricultural crops at select sites across the state. The \$410,000 in state funds provided by this bill will be augmented by \$225,000 from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and \$165,000 from the Oregon Association of Clean Water Agencies (ACWA).

Land application of biosolids is a sustainable cost-effective practice that benefits farmers by offsetting demands for commercial fertilizers, increasing crop productivity, improving soil conditions over time, sequestering carbon, and helping farmers' economic bottom line. Maintaining these practices as a partnership between wastewater utilities and agricultural communities has served Oregon well for decades. With growing scientific evidence showing that exposure to PFAS can lead to human health problems, the question that now needs to be answered for Oregon farmers, utilities, and regulators is if and how PFAS compounds found in biosolids, even at low levels, impact farm soils, crops, and water quality. This study will go a long way to answer that question.

***Participation in this study by farmers and the wastewater treatment utilities is voluntary, and data collection and reporting will maintain the anonymity of the farmers, field locations, and contributing wastewater utilities to the extent allowed by law. The following coalition supports HB 2947.***

