

February 3, 2025

To: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire
From: Jim Klipfel
Re: Support of Senate Bill 747 - Fertilizer Use Reporting

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, and members of the Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire,

I live outside of Boardman and have a contaminated well. I work in customer service and have since leaving the military in 1998. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 747, the fertilizer reporting bill.

My wife and I moved to Boardman from Vernonia about five years ago. We bought a house outside of Boardman without knowing about the nitrate pollution problem. When we bought the place, we were lied to and didn't know it was going on with the water. Even our real estate agent didn't know what was going on because there has been a lack of public information about the nitrate pollution until recently.

I have many concerns about nitrate contamination of wells in my community. First, my well last tested at 44.5 mg/L, more than four times the limit, so we can't drink water from our own tap. Second, I hate that my grandkids are not able to play in the sprinklers or drink the water. Third, nitrate pollution affects the resale value of our property. Because the pollution is so high, filters don't work for us. We can't bring the nitrate level down far enough to meet the drinking water requirements. The water isn't safe so we can't drink it and we can't sell our house.

I support Senate Bill 747 because we need information about pollution and we need to hold all the sources of pollution accountable. DEQ has data on the polluters like the Port of Morrow and dairies because they have permits but we don't have data on fertilizer pollution.

We need more accountability for big irrigated ag to report fertilizer use because it is a major source of pollution. We need this information in order to protect our water and stop pollution. Big ag already knows how much fertilizer is being put on which crop and when because they are huge businesses and because they have to pay for it. Well-run businesses track costs.

When a soldier goes into battle, they need a battle plan. They need to know all points of contention before they can claim any victory. We need to be victorious against nitrate pollution, but we can't solve a problem without all the variables. Fertilizer use is one of the variables.

I urge you to support Senate Bill 747 and help us end nitrate pollution.

Sincerely,
Jim Klipfel
Boardman, OR