

February 3, 2025

To: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire  
From: Well User 3  
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 have a well and live in the Boardman area. I am retired after working as a welding inspector across the state and in other states. I am writing to support the fertilizer reporting bill, Senate Bill 747.

My family and I have been living in Boardman since 1955. I became aware of the nitrate contamination in our groundwater around 1976 when my neighbor dug a new 160 ft well and asked me if I had tested for nitrate. Theirs was at 40 mg/L at the time. So I installed an RO system, but maintenance was difficult to keep up with. Now, more than four decades later, my well tests at 48 mg/L, which I learned is over the federal limit of 10 mg/L. Now, I have a filter from the state. Now that I have that, I test regularly with test strips, and it's still unsafe, testing almost at 12 mg/L with the filter.

My well water is not safe to drink, and every time I have family members visiting me I worry about their safety. I have 5 kids of my own, 12 grand kids, 24 great grandkids, and five great-great grandkids. Having safe drinking water for my large family is of the utmost importance. Currently, we can't cook with this tap water or even make a pot of coffee without taking extra precautions. I have spent a lot of time and energy worrying about this issue. In the 1980s, I lost my oldest daughter to cancer. She was only 31 and left behind three little kids. While I can't say for certain that her cancer developed as a result of drinking the contaminated water, I can't help but wonder.

I know others in the community have also experienced terrible loss, and that is why I ask you to support Senate Bill 747.

I am in the direct line of the contamination coming from big ag. We need the Oregon Department of Agriculture to collect information about fertilizer use—how much is being put on and when. Right now fertilizer is one of the biggest sources of nitrate, but no information about fertilizer pollution is being collected or reported. If it isn't reported, how can we track it? If it isn't tracked, how can we address it? I urge legislators to support Senate Bill 747.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written comments anonymously. I have family members that work at one of the local processing plants. Unfortunately, I fear that my involvement in this issue could impact their job security, so I have chosen to remain anonymous.

Sincerely,  
Well User 3  
Boardman, OR