



February 10, 2025

Representative Ken Helm, Co-Chair
Representative Mark Owens, Co-Chair
Committee Members
House Committee on Agricultural, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Subject: Support for HB 2169

Dear Co-Chairs and Committee Members:

The WateReuse Association Pacific Northwest Section is writing in support of House Bill 2169. HB 2169 directs the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to continue its efforts, started under previous legislation, to address regulatory barriers, develop technical assistance resources, and implement a coordinated state program to support new and expanded water reuse opportunities, in consultation with other state agencies, municipal wastewater utilities, and other stakeholders.

The WateReuse Association is the nation's only trade association solely dedicated to advancing laws, policy, funding, and public acceptance of recycled water. Established in California in 1990, WateReuse now has members in 38 states, the District of Columbia, and 11 countries. Whether we call it reclaimed, recycled, or reused, water is an essential resource in the Pacific Northwest. The number of water reuse facilities that are operational, under construction, or in various stages of planning has increased significantly in the Pacific Northwest over the past several years. In Oregon specifically, water reuse is used to keep clean, cold water in our rivers to support healthy fish populations and other important wildlife habitat.

The WateReuse Association regularly engages with recycled water producers and users alike to understand important drivers for recycled water implementation, as well as common barriers. In addition to supporting the ongoing work by Oregon Department of Environmental Quality to improve regulatory and permitting structures, WateReuse is in strong support of involving additional important State agencies in a

multifaceted approach to managing Oregon's water resources. HB2169 directs Oregon DEQ to continue efforts initiated by HB2010 in 2023, and expand upon the scope of work to coordinate directly with Oregon Water Resources Department. This interagency coordination is crucial to developing long-term, sustainable strategies for enhancing water supply reliability and environmental water quality. This is essential as we continue to realize the severe and rapidly progressing impacts of climate change. With another water portfolio option in recycled water, we are better equipped to protect our freshwater resources, wildlife habitat, business sectors, and communities.

HB 2169 is needed because Oregon's outdated permitting requirements do not reflect current-day understanding of the benefits of recycled water, and the technological advancements that support this safe and reliable resource. HB 2169 is also needed to encourage improved coordination and collaboration among state agencies in alignment with the State's policies in support of reuse projects. DEQ and WRD historically have not had the resources or a sufficient mandate to work to resolve these issues. This has deterred utilities from pursuing the types of water quality compliance projects that have multiple environmental, community, and economic benefits.

Thank you to Chair Helm and Chair Owens for your sponsorship of this bill, and to the committee for considering this important action.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a light blue background. The signature is stylized and appears to read 'Royce Davis'.

Royce Davis
President, WateReuse Association Pacific Northwest Section

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