

**Testimony to the House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and  
Water Committee  
On HB 2169**

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance equitable, innovative and collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

**Oregon Environmental Council strongly supports HB 2169**

Water is a finite resource. We've all heard some version of the saying, "They aren't making any more water." In light of that folk wisdom, it makes sense for Oregon to aggressively move forward with designing, implementing and expanding opportunities for effective, efficient and environmentally responsible water reuse projects across the state. Municipalities, industry, agriculture and the natural environment can all benefit from water reuse, particularly in the face of declining groundwater levels, documented changes in timing and duration of precipitation and increasing demands on all water supplies.

Water reuse can increase drought resilience and support sustainable water management while lowering energy use, minimizing chemical needs, conserving resources, benefiting critical habitats, and reducing carbon emissions. In most cases, water reuse projects are cost-effective ways for the regulated community to meet a range of regulatory requirements, which, in turn, can stabilize utility rates while actually improving water quality.

In 2023, the legislature showed strong support for water reuse in HB 2010. According to DEQ's progress report on water reuse, dated September 15, 2024, progress has been made towards achieving the outcomes put forward in HB 2010. However, more needs to be done to fulfill the water reuse ambitions of the 2023 legislature.

HB 2169 sets the agencies up to fully implement a state-wide water reuse program that will realize those ambitions. This bill requires interagency cooperation on water reuse policies and permitting programs, ensuring that Oregon's permitting requirements are aligned with current technology and practices, while protecting the public interest in equitable water management as well as protecting the natural environment and water-dependent ecosystems.

**OEC urges you to support HB 2169.**