

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



*Where Life is Sweet*

**Subject: Support for HB 2169**

Dear Co-Chairs and Committee Members:

On behalf of City of Hermiston, I'm writing to express our support of HB 2169. As an agriculturally based community, we understand the critical importance of water resources to both our economy and our environment. Our city has been successfully reusing water and enjoying the benefits of it for a little over a decade now. We were able to accomplish this through the hard work and dedication of a multitude of partners, we took a significant step forward in late 2024 by beginning to process our effluent into what is now Class-A recycled water. Now, during our hot irrigation season, we divert all 1.5 million gallons of recycled water produced per day to the West Extension Irrigation District. The use of this recycled water helps our local farms, strengthens our economy, protects fish and improves the water quality of the Umatilla River.

HB 2169 is needed to ensure that other communities across Oregon can implement similar programs and maximize the benefits of water reuse. The bill will allow cities to work cooperatively with farmers and irrigators to make the most of our water resources in an environmentally sustainable and beneficial way. Unfortunately, Oregon's permitting requirements are outdated, and many communities have found the regulatory process difficult, complex, and costly to navigate. Without changes, valuable water reuse opportunities will remain out of the reach for many.

This legislation is also essential for improving coordination and collaboration among state agencies responsible for implement Oregon's water reuses policies. Historically, the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Water Resources Department (WRD) have not had the resources or a strong enough mandate to resolve key regulatory issues. HB 2169 will help bridge these gaps, ensuring that state agencies can better support local governments and utilities in adopting sustainable water management practices.

Without the passage of HB 2169, recent efforts to update Oregon's recycled water regulatory framework and improve interagency coordination will not be sustainable. The people of our state will miss out on the full benefits of resource recovery and beneficial reuse projects that communities like our city has already seen. By supporting this bill, the Legislature can help more cities and towns implement innovative water reuse solutions that enhance local economies, support agriculture, and protect Oregon's waterways.

City of Hermiston Administrative Offices

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The City of Hermiston urges your support of HB 2169 to help expand these opportunities across our state. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Doug Primmer  
Mayor of Hermiston