

Submitter: Bobby Levy  
On Behalf Of: House District 58  
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2988

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and Members of the Committee, My name is Bobby Levy and I am the State Representative for House District 58, which includes Umatilla, Union, and Wallowa Counties.

I am honored to testify in strong support of HB 2988, a critical step toward securing Oregon's water future through responsible aquifer recharge and storage. Water is the lifeblood of our communities, particularly in rural Oregon, where agriculture, industry, and local economies depend on a stable and sustainable water supply. As we face increasing pressures from drought and shifting climate patterns, we must take proactive steps to ensure that our water resources are managed wisely.

HB 2988 directs the Water Resources Department, in consultation with key state agencies, to identify and address these barriers, helping expand aquifer recharge and storage projects across the state. This bill is not just about studying the issue—it's about streamlining permitting, providing technical assistance, and developing practical regulatory solutions that allow communities to take action. Additionally, it ensures we learn from other states with successful programs, adopting best practices while maintaining strong environmental protections.

For rural and agricultural communities, reliable water access is not a luxury—it is a necessity. Without a forward-thinking approach to water storage and recharge, we risk long-term consequences that could devastate local economies and threaten our ability to sustain productive farmland. HB 2988 is a commonsense, bipartisan effort to address these challenges before they become crises.

I urge this committee to support HB 2988 and take an important step toward safeguarding Oregon's water future for generations to come. Thank you for your time and consideration.