

Testimony to the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water

re: HB 3419

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**Karen Lewotsky, Water Program Director & Rural Partnerships Le
Oregon Environmental Council**

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 supports HB 3419 -3.

Oregon is facing an unknown and perhaps unknowable shift in climate and precipitation patterns. That means we can no longer rely on the past to predict our water future. It means we have to gather the information needed to understand the scope of our water resource. It means we have to use data and information to help guide our decision-making and help ensure a secure water future for our state. It means we have to provide assistance to those who need it in order to come into compliance with measurement and reporting needs. HB 3914 addresses all of these needs, acknowledging that accurate water use measurement and reporting is an essential tool for modern water management.

We are pleased that the bill clarifies the scope of the Water Resources Department's authority to require measurement and reporting from water users. OEC suggests, however, that further clarification as to the specific water measurement and reporting parameters the Department is authorized to require will make this bill even more effective, and avoid questions of intent during rule-making and implementation.

We also appreciate that HB 3914 provides for a cost share program to help install and maintain water measurement infrastructure. Modern equipment may require sophisticated installation and the devices themselves can be expensive. Defraying some of these costs through the Water Measurement Cost Share Program Revolving Fund is an effective way to ensure compliance with reporting requirements.

Some variation on the old adage "you can't manage what you don't measure" is commonly invoked at this point in the conversation, and yet in the past we kept finding reasons not to measure and report, which meant we kept finding reasons to not fully and responsibly manage as well. **OEC appreciates and supports the intent of HB 3914, encourages the clarification of the range of measurement and reporting approaches and tools being provided to the Department, and strongly encourages the committee to pass this bill.**

Thank you for your attention to our comments.