

Submitter: Richard Turner

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3573

I support HB 3573, for funding relating to the monitoring of groundwater wells and other water monitoring systems.

The OWRB is charged by the legislature with managing a public resource, groundwater and surface water, for beneficial uses across the state, using data and methods of analysis of data which benefit the state the most. Without adequate funding for data collection, the OWRB cannot possibly be expected to carry out the mission the legislature has mandated for it.

While the funding amounts designated in this bill will not possibly cover all the monitoring needs throughout the state, these funds can begin to assist the OWRB in monitoring a select number of wells and aquifers deemed most critical and most at risk. Until the state makes a total funding commitment to funding a network of well monitors which can give real time data to water masters and agency staff, HB 3573 is a good starting point for determining the best management of dwindling water availability statewide.

We cannot manage what we do not measure. The opponents of this bill are aware of this also, and this makes the funding mechanism as important as the policy directive of the legislature. We have to now seek data in quantity to avoid a future where water is scarce, expensive and can promote conflicts. This funding bill for water monitoring data, in my view is an ounce of prevention worth several tons of cure.