

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

I support Senate Bill 427.

I believe it is needed to safeguard streamflows in water right transfers.

I feel a profound connection to our waters in Oregon. They are our state's lifeblood. Rivers provide the breeding ground for salmon, fuel our forest and crop growth, and provide recreation opportunities and income. The water is a gift that belongs to all of us.

Yet for far too long, an outdated loophole has allowed the Oregon Water Resources Department to approve applications for water right transfers without adequate consideration of whether the change will harm streamflows. Lower water levels in a stream can hurt fish, impair water quality, and decrease scenic and recreation values.

Senate Bill 427 safeguards our streams—and the fish, water quality, and scenic values they support—by ensuring voluntary water right changes won't further diminish streamflows. This narrow fix closes a dangerous loophole and brings modern environmental values into Oregon's outdated water right transfer review process.

I urge your support of SB 427 and the life-sustaining streamflows it will safeguard.

Sincerely,

Michael