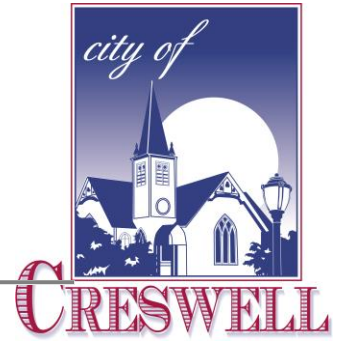


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February 28, 2025

House Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3634 – Operator-in-Training and Water Workforce Program

Dear Chair Hudson, Vice-Chairs Fragala & Harbick, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the City of Creswell, I would like to express strong support for House Bill 3634, which establishes the Water Workforce Program (Operator-in-Training) to address the critical need for drinking water and wastewater operators.

Cities across the State of Oregon are having significant challenges in filling critical positions in water and wastewater positions. Careers in water treatment are good stable positions and good paying jobs particularly in rural communities. Furthermore, many rural communities are having significant challenges in finding qualified people to fill these critical jobs. This bill will give potential future employees a better pathway to get the training and experience they need to fill these positions across the State of Oregon. In addition, the bill will eliminate barriers to and leveraging opportunities to connect individuals to career opportunities within the water and wastewater utilities sector.

Reliable water and wastewater infrastructure and the people who staff these positions are essential for public health and community well-being. Many cities face a growing crisis as a significant portion of the workforce nears retirement. Without trained replacements, Oregon risks disruptions to safe drinking water and wastewater services.

Respectfully Submitted,

Spencer Nebel  
Interim City Manager  
City of Creswell  
snebel@Creswell-or.us

CC Nicholis Smith, Mayor  
Cliff Bellow, Public Works Superintendent