



Beaverton, City of
Clackamas River Water
Cornelius, City of
Forest Grove, City of
Gladstone, City of
Gresham, City of
Hillsboro, City of
Lake Grove Water District
Lake Oswego, City of
Milwaukie, City of
Oak Lodge Water Services
Portland, City of
Raleigh Water District
Rockwood Water PUD
Sandy, City of
Scappoose, City of
Sherwood, City of
South Fork Water Board
Sunrise Water Authority
Tigard, City of
Troutdale, City of
Tualatin, City of
Tualatin Valley Water District
West Slope Water District
Wilsonville, City of

March 5, 2025

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

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

Dear Chair Hudson, Co-Vice Chairs Fragala and Harbick, and members of the committee:

On behalf of the Regional Water Providers Consortium (Consortium), I am writing to express our **strong support for House Bill 3634**, establishing the Water Workforce Program to grow the supply of skilled water professionals.

The Consortium is comprised of 25 drinking water providers in the Portland, Oregon Metropolitan Area. The Consortium has been working collaboratively for 28 years to improve the planning and management of municipal water supplies in the region. Our members provide drinking water to over 1.6 million customers and operate 10 treatment plants, with two more coming on-line in the next couple of years.

Water providers are facing a staffing crisis as a large portion of our highly trained workforce is nearing retirement. Funding for operator-in-training apprenticeship programs will help water providers meet the challenges of recruiting and retaining a qualified workforce. Paid internship programs and expanding bilingual training opportunities to promote the workforce development of qualified drinking water and wastewater operators will also aid in these efforts.

HB 3634 fills an important gap in Oregon and will help ensure that our communities continue to have access to safe and clean water. As water providers we are happy to be a partner in these efforts.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Geisen, Managing Director

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