

Submitter: Joe Moore
On Behalf Of: The Rivers and Lakes and Groundwater of Oregon
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3501

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens: I'm a registered voter in Washington County, Oregon.

I'm writing to express my strong opposition to HB3501.

This is the summary, cut and pasted directly from the bill: Prohibits the consideration of whether certain changes related to water rights would impair or be detrimental to the public interest.

So. Considering detriments to the public interest shall be prohibited.

Isn't it the literal job of government to protect the public interest? And wouldn't prohibiting that consideration violate the First Amendment? I am not a lawyer, but there probably is a lawyer somewhere in Oregon who would make that argument.

Of course, I'm selfish. I paddle a kayak, and a canoe. I'm a member of a couple different paddling organizations. I get emails from Waterwatch of Oregon, who alerted me to this particular bill. Also, I drink water, take showers, and sometimes even cook rice, which requires clean water. And my tax dollars would be used to defend against that lawyer taking the State of Oregon to court for First Amendment violations.

Again, is it not the job of the government to consider the public interest? What does that even mean, the public interest? Clean water is in the public interest. An ample supply of water is in the public interest. Is an ample supply of clean water for an industrial hog farm in the public interest? That would be a discussion to have, and this bill would prohibit that discussion.

To be honest, I'm ashamed that I would even need to write this letter. I'm ashamed that any elected official in the State of Oregon would think that prohibiting a discussion of what is in the public interest...would be in the public interest.

Please, do not advance this bill.

a Concerned Citizen of Washington County