



HB 3501
Testimony in Support
Before the
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
March 10, 2025

Co-Chairs Helm, Owens, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3501.

The mission of the Oregon Ground Water Association is to promote sustainable groundwater development and management for maximum beneficial use without waste or contamination. Organized in 1949, the Association has sought to encourage responsible stewardship of the groundwater resource with its leadership in industry education and legislation.

The Oregon Ground Water Association (OGWA) is a nonprofit membership organization composed of water well constructors, well pump and water treatment contractors, hydrogeologists and engineers, manufacturers and suppliers of equipment, and other various trades engaged with the groundwater resource. From these various disciplines, we have the benefit of receiving many perspectives on proposed legislation.

Given adoption of the groundwater allocation rules by the Oregon Water Resources Commission last September, water right transfers have become one of the few remaining alternatives available for securing new water rights for housing, municipal water systems, and farms. Adoption of these rules assumes that all groundwater sources are deemed to be fully appropriated. In the wake of these rules, members of the drilling community report purchases of millions of dollars of drilling equipment which now sit idle and will likely be sold off to drillers in other states.

The OGWA supports HB 3501 as a means to meet the Governor's stated housing production goals and provide for irrigation and drinking water needs. We cannot afford to lock up water availability for future generations. Transfers are now the primary management tool and we must maintain maximum flexibility in order to protect our future..

The OGWA encourages the Committee to pass HB 3501 and we thank you for the opportunity to comment.