



VANESSA CORNWALL

Intergovernmental Relations Officer
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DATE: March 24, 2025
TO: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
FROM: Vanessa Cornwall, Lane County Intergovernmental Relations Officer
RE: HB 3910, Relating to Domestic Water Supply District Authority

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Owen and Finger-McDonald, and Members of the Committee:

Hello Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Owens and Finger-McDonald, and members of the committee. For the record, I'm Vanessa Cornwall, Intergovernmental Relations Officer for the Lane County Board of Commissioners. I am here in strong support of HB 3910 and the -1 amendment. I want to thank Representative Wright for drafting this bill.

A small change to ORS 264.335 would allow the Mapleton Water District to take on sanitary authority, enabling the Mapleton Wastewater Association to dissolve and transfer its assets. HB 3910 and its amendment provide the necessary framework for this merger.

Mapleton's wastewater system is on the verge of failure. In 2024, an infrastructure breakdown caused unchlorinated effluent to discharge into the Siuslaw River for months, threatening public health. The Association depleted its savings on emergency repairs and is one failure away from bankruptcy.

State agencies want to help, but as a public charity, the Association is ineligible for grants. Converting to a Special District takes years, but merging with the Mapleton Water District provides an immediate solution. Both boards support this merger, allowing for critical infrastructure investment and cost efficiencies.

This legislative fix would not only safeguard the Siuslaw River and downstream communities but also help other districts statewide streamline operations and reduce costs. I urge your support. Thank you.

ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY VANESSA CORNWALL, LANE COUNTY
INTERGOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS OFFICER