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March 25, 2025

To: Andrea Salinas, Cong. District 6

From: Connie Lindsay, GK Machine

RE: Senate Bill 1153

Dear Congresswomen Salinas,

My name is Connie Lindsay, GK Machine, Inc. We are based in Donald, Oregon, and we urge you to oppose Senate Bill 1153.

- **Limits Flexibility:** SB 1153 would severely restrict water users' ability to adapt to changing conditions by imposing vague and broad environmental assessments.
- **Litigation Risk:** SB 1153 could lead to years-long delays and costly litigation from third parties without improving environmental protections.
- **Pulls the rug from under farmers:** Agricultural users form a significant portion of Oregon's traded economy, but farmers rely on the dependability of senior water rights currently held, so they can sustain their crops. At the same time, unused rights are a wasted resource. A transfer is the only means to facilitate responsible, flexible water management and use.
- **Prevents agricultural access to water:** New water rights are almost impossible to get. Transfers are the only means for ensuring existing rights are used efficiently. The Legislature should seek ways to enhance flexibility, ensuring that water users can improve operational efficiencies while protecting existing water rights. Senate Bill 1153 would do the opposite.
- **Burden of proof:** The bill does not require objectors to prove alleged harm in seeking denial of a transfer. Places the burden of proof on the water user to demonstrate that their transfer or application is not harmful. It is difficult to prove a negative and unfair to ask that of applicants.

Water rights transfers affected by this bill could include a change in the point of diversion, a proposal to use water outside the basin of origin, a transfer of supplemental water rights, a change in the use of stored water, temporary transfers, and transfers that change the point of diversion from surface water to groundwater.