

Submitter: Pam Birmingham
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SJR28

My name is Pam Birmingham and I live in Clatsop County. I am a real estate broker, a former Park Ranger and a member of North Coast Communities for Watershed Protection and I strongly support SJR28. A quick personal example of why this is needed: Several years ago a timber company legally harvested the land next to my home. They knew my domestic water source came from that land and was legally registered with the state as a shallow well. I showed them where it was and asked for it to be protected. They chose not to take measures to protect it. I ended up (as a 60+ year old woman) having to live without one drop of water to my home/property for over two years until I could save the \$25,000+ to have a well drilled. Before the harvest I tried seeking legal protection but was told there was no way to protect my water source. The timber company walked away with at least \$1,000,000 and left me alone with no water and no recourse because they had followed all the current rules. If our constitution was amended to allow me to have my registered, legal domestic water source protected through the constitutional right to water, the timber company might have made \$10,000-\$20,000 less in profits but I would have still had water and they would have still had a healthy profit. The right to our citizens to have clean air and water is so basic that it shouldn't even be a question and certainly not the doom and gloom scenarios that some of the opposition prophesied. As a Realtor I care about the people who live here and I was rather appalled and embarrassed by Oregon Association of Realtors speaking out against the right of people to live in a state where our rights to clean air, clean water and a healthy environment are protected. As decision makers I think your constituency would be unhappy if you chose to deny their rights to these basic needs.

Thank you,
Pam Birmingham