

Submitter: James Best  
On Behalf Of: Self and Family Farms  
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3343

TESTIMONY IN OPPOSITION TO AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 3343  
Submitted to the Oregon Legislature  
April 1, 2025

Dear Members of the Committee,

I write to express my strong opposition to the proposed amendments to House Bill 3343. These amendments represent a concerning attempt to significantly expand the scope of water regulation in Oregon through a bill that was originally focused on well-constructor licensing requirements.

#### ORIGINAL INTENT VS. PROPOSED CHANGES

The original House Bill 3343 was straightforward in its purpose: modifying qualifications for water well constructor licenses and adding welding certification requirements. This focused approach allowed for proper public input and stakeholder engagement on a specific issue affecting well construction.

However, the proposed amendments (LC 1141) would dramatically transform this bill by:

1. Creating a new water measurement cost share program
2. Establishing mandatory water use measurement and reporting requirements
3. Expanding enforcement authority and penalties
4. Creating new funding mechanisms for water measurement infrastructure

These substantial changes were introduced without the benefit of:

- Public hearings on water measurement requirements
- Stakeholder input from water users
- Economic impact analysis
- Consideration of implementation costs for water users

#### CONCERNS ABOUT THE PROCESS

The attempt to add these far-reaching water measurement requirements to a bill about well constructor licensing raises serious concerns about the legislative process:

1. Transparency: These significant changes to water policy should be introduced as standalone legislation, not buried in amendments to an unrelated bill.
2. Due Process: Water users deserve the opportunity to provide input on proposed measurement requirements through proper public hearings and comment periods.
3. Scope Creep: The amendments would transform a focused bill about well construction qualifications into a major expansion of water regulation.

## IMPACT ON WATER USERS

If adopted, these amendments would have significant consequences for water users:

1. Mandatory Measurement: Water users would be required to install and maintain measurement devices at their own expense, with only partial cost sharing available through a competitive grant program.
2. Reporting Requirements: New mandatory reporting requirements would create additional administrative burdens.
3. Enforcement: Expanded penalty provisions could result in significant fines for technical violations.
4. Implementation Costs: The actual cost of implementing these requirements has not been thoroughly analyzed or disclosed to stakeholders.

## RECOMMENDATION

I strongly urge the committee to:

1. Reject these amendments to HB 3343
2. Return to the original purpose of the bill regarding well constructor licensing
3. If water measurement requirements are needed, introduce them as separate legislation that can receive proper public scrutiny and stakeholder input

## CONCLUSION

The proposed amendments to HB 3343 represent an inappropriate attempt to expand water regulation without proper public process. By adding these significant requirements to an unrelated bill, the amendments circumvent the normal legislative process and deny stakeholders the opportunity to provide meaningful input on important water policy changes.

I respectfully request that you oppose these amendments and maintain the original focus of HB 3343 on well-constructor licensing requirements.

Sincerely,

James Best  
Arcadia Best Farms  
971.417.5547