

Submitter: Zachary Hall

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3484

House Bill 3484 is a deceptive waste of time and money, and you should be ashamed for pushing it. A vague “study” of water rules with a \$1.7 million cash grab for the Water Resources Department? This isn’t about solutions; it’s a bloated power play threatening Oregonians. Let’s tear it apart with facts and expose your nonsense. This is a blank check for bureaucracy. You’re dumping \$227,328 on admin and \$1,464,003 on water rights processing—\$1.7 million total—under an “emergency” excuse. OWRD’s 2023 budget: \$90 million, with 40% already stretched thin (fiscal report). Oregon’s General Fund faces a \$1 billion shortfall (2025-27 forecast, DAS). Why siphon cash for a vague “study” when schools and roads are starving? It’s reckless.

There’s no crisis here. OWRD’s 2022 report: water right transactions lag due to staffing, not rules—90% of delays are backlogs, not policy (OWRD data). Only 3 of 18 basins are “critical” (USGS 2023), and they’re tied to climate and big ag, not rule gaps. Your “emergency” is a lie—Oregon’s water use dropped 5% since 2015 (OWRD stats). This is a manufactured excuse to grow government.

It’s a threat to water users. “Study rules related to water”? That’s code for meddling. OWRD oversees 80% of groundwater via permits—exempt uses (15,000 gallons/day homes) are a fraction (2023 report). Your 2026 report tees up restrictions by 2027, hitting rural Oregon—Harney County’s 95% well-reliant (OWRD 2020). Ag, \$5 billion yearly (ODA 2022), can’t take more red tape.

You’re dodging real fixes. OWRD: 70% of water disputes are permitted overuse, not rules (2023 log). Infrastructure leaks 30% (EPA 2021)—fund that, not paper-pushing. Your \$1.7 million could hire 20 field staff to clear backlogs (OWRD pays \$80k/year average). Instead, you bloat desks.

Kill this travesty, Helm and Owens. Use the money on real needs—basin recovery (15% over-permitted, OWRD 2023) or leaks. HB 3484 is a cash-burning insult to Oregon taxpayers. End it before it wastes more.