

Submitter: Andrew Hall
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1154

Honorable Chair and Members,

I'm Andrew Hall, a resident from Marion County, opposing SB 1154-1 due to its high costs and litigation risks, especially if private wells are taxed.

Crushing Costs

This bill's new groundwater rules will burden rural Oregonians. Monitoring devices (ORS 540.435) cost \$500-\$2,000 per well, plus upkeep and reporting. Septic inspections and repairs (Section 19) could run \$5,000-\$30,000 per household. Interagency teams and action plans (ORS 468B.177, 468B.184) demand funding—likely from new taxes or fees on well owners, adding hundreds annually. The state offers no cost estimates or relief, hitting rural budgets hard.

Takings Litigation Risk

If taxes or restrictions target private wells, SB 1154-1 risks takings claims under the U.S. and Oregon Constitutions. Wells are property rights; taxing or limiting them could devalue land, triggering lawsuits. *Lucas v. South Carolina* (1992) and *Penn Central* (1978) show regulations cutting economic use can be takings. Section 17's development bans alone could spark claims if land loses value. Legal battles could cost millions in fees and payouts, repeating Oregon's Measure 37/49 debacles.

A Better Way

Voluntary programs—cost-sharing, tax credits, education—could protect groundwater without breaking residents or inviting lawsuits. SB 1154-1's mandates ignore these options.

Conclusion

SB 1154-1's costs and legal risks make it unworkable. Reject it for solutions balancing environment and property rights.

Thank you,

Andrew Hall

Salem Oregon