

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

Dear Chair Senator Jeff Golden, Vice-Chair Senator Todd Nash, and Committee Members,

I strongly oppose SB 1154, SB 1154 A-1, and any possible future amendments of it. I urge you to Vote NO on it.

On Private Property

Wells are the private property of individuals who own them. They pay for the wells, their maintenance, and the land on which they are established. Those are responsibilities self-governed owners happily assume when purchasing their land. No one has the right to trample on the private property rights of an individual—whether accessing it or regulating it. Furthermore, a tax/"fee" on and the regulation of well water will further burden private property owners and businesses.

On Obtaining Private Property of Natural Resources and Limited Government

John Locke was a cornerstone figure who wrote on modern philosophies of government (his writings greatly influenced Blackstone and the Founders of America). In his "Two Treaties of Civil Government" he argued for natural rights and limited government. In relation to this topic of well water, water is initially "common to all". However: 1. the water is falling on private land making it privately owned water; 2. individuals can "mix" their labor with the unowned resource and make it their private property. In effect, this is what private property owners do with wells. Therefore, the water and the wells are the private property of the land owner. For civil government to tax/impose a "fee" on well water and to regulate wells is a blatant overreach of government power.

On Taxes

In Chapter 11 of "Two Treaties of Civil Government", John Locke wrote in Sect.140., "It is true, governments cannot be supported without great charge, and it is fit every one who enjoys his share of the protection, should pay out of his estate his proportion for the maintenance of it. But still it must be with his own consent, i.e. the consent of the majority, giving it either by themselves, or their representatives chosen by them: for if any one shall claim a power to lay and levy taxes on the people, by his own authority, and without such consent of the people, he thereby invades the

fundamental law of property, and subverts the end of government: for what property have I in that, which another may by right take, when he pleases, to himself?"

On Honoring Principles of Liberty

As such, I urge our Legislators to:

- Listen to constituents who own wells as they do not give their consent to this tax or possible "fee" or regulation of their water/wells.
- Remember that Oregon is a part of a Constitutional Representative Republic (i.e. a free nation). The Principle of Private Property is one of the bedrock principles of our free nation and it must be honored to keep liberty.
- Remember the Representatives are to represent according to America's Principles of Liberty.
- Also, please read the writings of John Locke and the French economist Frédéric Bastiat and apply their wisdom, for the sake of liberty.

Oregon Government's continual desire to impose an increase of taxes on her citizens begs the following questions:

1. Why does civil government want to tax on something it doesn't cost civil government to service and maintain?
2. Why does Oregon's government want to further burden individuals and businesses with another tax/"fee"?
3. Where is civil government's compassion on hard-working, private property and business owners who are already struggling to make ends meet?"

SB 1154 is an unnecessary tax/"fee" and regulation on The People who own wells. Furthermore, SB 1154 is punishment on hard-working citizens because it tramples on the liberty of private property. Again, I urge you to Vote NO on SB 1154.

Respectfully,
Heather Hall