

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

Chair members of the committee,  
I am writing in strong opposition to Senate Bill 1154.

I am a disabled, low-income Oregonian whose only access to water is through a private well. This bill, as written, threatens not just my access to water, but my health, safety, and ability to remain in my home. I simply do not have the financial means to comply with the mandates this bill could impose — particularly the requirement to repair or abandon existing wells, which can cost tens of thousands of dollars.

Water is a basic human need. For those of us living in rural areas — especially those living on fixed incomes or dealing with long-term disabilities — wells are not a luxury. They are a lifeline. If this bill passes and I am forced to alter or abandon my well, I could lose my home and my ability to survive independently.

I am extremely concerned about:

- The lack of funding or assistance for low-income individuals who will be impacted by these requirements.
- Restrictions on property use or development tied to water supply access — this directly harms rural Oregonians who rely on private wells.
- Unclear protections for vulnerable residents, like myself, who are already struggling to maintain safe and healthy living conditions.

SB 1154 is being presented as a step forward for environmental protection, but it risks becoming a devastating blow to people who are already marginalized. This legislation places an overwhelming burden on those least able to shoulder it, and without funding, flexibility, or meaningful public input from low-income rural communities, it will do far more harm than good.

Please do not move forward with this bill in its current form. We need solutions that address water quality without forcing Oregon's most vulnerable residents into impossible situations.

Sincerely,  
Sean Bernhardt