

Testimony in Opposition to Senate Bill 1154

Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Katie Glaser. I am a farmer and I'm here today to speak in strong opposition to Senate Bill 1154.

While I share the bill's stated goal of protecting Oregon's water quality, I believe this legislation would have unintended and deeply harmful consequences for our agricultural communities, those who hold legal water rights, and Oregonians who depend on their land for their livelihood and heritage.

First, let's be clear: everyone wants clean water. Farmers, ranchers, rural landowners, city residents—we all depend on clean, abundant water not just for personal use, but for growing food, raising animals, and sustaining rural economies. The problem with SB 1154 is not the goal, but the approach.

A point that is very troubling, this bill doesn't just threaten livelihoods—it may threaten constitutional rights. **By granting broad authority to state agencies to access private property, SB 1154 risks violating the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution**, which protects citizens from unreasonable searches and seizures. If regulatory personnel are allowed to enter private land without a warrant, proper notice, or consent, that's a clear overstep of government authority. Our rights to due process and property are not optional—they are foundational. Oregonians should not have to surrender their constitutional protections in order to comply with vague or overly broad environmental mandates.

This bill proposes sweeping regulatory authority that could override existing water rights and impose severe restrictions on how landowners use and manage their property. Oregon's water rights system is foundational—it's how we've ensured fair, legal, and responsible water use for generations. Undermining that system, as this bill threatens to do, would create uncertainty. Water users who have followed the rules for decades, even generations, could suddenly find themselves penalized or unable to maintain their operations.

Agriculture is not just a business—it's a way of life, and a backbone of Oregon's economy. SB 1154 risks stripping away essential property rights under the guise of environmental protection, without providing viable alternatives or support. It imposes one-size-fits-all regulations that fail to consider the local realities and the stewardship already being practiced by those who live on and work the land.

CJ Nugent, a lifelong well driller following in his father's footsteps, testified before this committee. He explained that individuals purchasing land and installing wells are typically well aware that water quality testing may reveal certain issues. In his experience, these new landowners aren't alarmed by the findings—they expect them and are prepared to install high-quality filtration systems. Thanks to advancements in modern science and technology, CJ

emphasized that today's filtration systems are more than capable of addressing contaminants and ensuring clean, safe water.

There is a better way. Rather than impose top-down mandates, we should demand that enough time is given to consider such a big change to what we already do. This is much too short of a timeline to know and understand any adverse side effects. We need to be investing in collaborative, science-based solutions that bring together landowners, conservationists, and communities. Incentives for water conservation, infrastructure upgrades, and voluntary watershed restoration programs have proven far more effective and equitable.

Let's work together and give enough time to figure this out in order to protect Oregon's water—without jeopardizing the rights, livelihoods, and futures of those who feed our state and care for its land.

I respectfully urge you to vote NO on Senate Bill 1154.

Thank you.

Ryan Glaser, Lebanon

Katie Glaser, Lebanon