



## **OREGON GROUND WATER ASSOCIATION**

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### **HB 3342-A**

#### **Testimony in Opposition of Sections 25-27**

#### **(Limitations on Extensions)**

#### **Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire**

**April 29, 2025**

Co-Chairs Helm, Owens, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in opposition to HB 3342-A in its current form.

The mission of the Oregon Ground Water Association is to promote sustainable groundwater development and management for maximum beneficial use without waste or contamination. Organized in 1949, the Association has sought to encourage responsible stewardship of the groundwater resource with its leadership in industry education and legislation.

The Oregon Ground Water Association (OGWA) is a nonprofit membership organization composed of water well constructors, well pump and water treatment contractors, hydrogeologists and engineers, manufacturers and suppliers of equipment, water rights examiners, and other various trades engaged with the groundwater resource. From these various disciplines, we have the benefit of receiving many perspectives on proposed legislation.

The OGWA applauds the Department for its attempt to streamline some of the draconian processes associated with processing water rights. However, we strongly oppose the provisions of Sections 25-27 which place limits on extensions. While we understand that the bill represents an attempt to reduce the number of contested transactions, and extensions are the highest protested transaction, aside from instream water rights, the complete removal of extensions across the board (except for holders of permits for municipal, quasi-municipal, group domestic or group domestic expanded uses) presents an undue burden on those property owners attempting to develop their water right.

Aside from the sometimes monumental amount red tape, development of a water right can prove costly. And, while we appreciate the addition of two years for completion of the construction process contained in Section 25(2), in some cases the property owner needs additional time to fund the project. Elimination of the extension process altogether will indeed capture water speculators; however, casting such a broad net will have serious negative consequences for landowners who truly need additional time for any number of legitimate reasons.

For these reasons, the OGWA strongly requests that sections 25-27 be removed or amended to allow limited extensions for holders of permits that are not for municipal, quasi-municipal, group domestic or group domestic expanded uses. Otherwise, we ask that you oppose HB 3342-A as it is currently written.