



MAPLETON WATER DISTRICT



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May 7, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfires
Oregon State Capitol
900 Salem Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: House Bill 3910

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Nash and members of the Committee:

This past winter the Mapleton Water District (MWD) Board of Commissioners unanimously approved a motion to consider assuming the sanitary responsibilities currently held by the Mapleton Commercial Area Owners Association (MCAOA), the operator of a sewer system contained entirely within the district.

The dire state of the sewer system has been addressed thoroughly by the MCAOA Chair Cythia Mateos in her written testimony provided to this committee. Her assessment is shared by me and other MWD commissioners.

However, I would like to emphasize the importance of this problem to the wider community. If the sewer system fails, customers of the sewer system would be required to install on-site waste treatment systems. This would be physically impossible for most of the businesses on the system and very difficult for all customers. Should homes and businesses be unable to install on-site wastewater treatment, these structures could then be condemned. This would in turn result in a loss of about ten percent of the Mapleton Water District's customers, which in turn results in fewer customers bearing the cost of water service in the area.

In short, this is a community problem, not just the problem of a couple dozen homes and businesses.

Should MWD assume the sanitation responsibilities of the MCAOA, it would open funding opportunities for sewer improvements not currently available. MCAOA is not eligible for public funding or most private charitable funding due to its tax status. As a special district, MWD is generally eligible for these funding opportunities.

This bill would give *our community* the opportunity to solve *our problems*. Thank you for taking the time out of a busy legislative session to consider House Bill 3910. I hope that the committee will support our efforts and move this bill forward to the full Senate.

Sincerely,

Vanessa West
Chair, Board of Commissioners



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