



## **Testimony in Support of SB5531**

To: Oregon Legislative Fiscal Office and Members of the Legislative Assembly

From: Andy Day, Board Member

**On behalf of: John Day Golf Club (Nonprofit): JDGC Water Conservation Improvement Project**

Date: May 7, 2025

Honorable Members of the Committee,

I am writing to encourage your support for the **John Day Golf Club's capital project request of \$1,711,796** to implement a **water conservation project** at our community's golf course. As a nonprofit organization, the John Day Golf Club has long served as a vital recreational and social hub for John Day and the surrounding communities. This project is essential to ensuring the club's environmental stewardship and sustainable water practices, supporting Grant County's youth, and preserving a valued community asset in the face of new challenges following the closure of Malheur Lumber last year.

### **Community and Youth Benefits**

The John Day Golf Club is much more than a sports facility. It is a community gathering place for residents of all ages and backgrounds, hosting local high school golf teams, junior camps, and clinics that introduce young people to the game and foster lifelong skills. The course provides a safe and healthy environment for youth development, teamwork, and mentorship, and is a source of pride for our community. The course is open to all Grant County residents and visitors.

### **Water Conservation and Sustainability**

With changing weather patterns and increasing pressure on local water resources, responsible water management is critical for the long-term viability of the golf club and the broader community. The closure of Malheur Lumber has heightened concerns about water supply reliability, as the mill's operations previously played a role in local water and wastewater systems. The proposed water conservation project will modernize irrigation systems, reduce water consumption, and help ensure a consistent water supply, even during drought or resource uncertainty.

By adopting best practices and new technologies as outlined in the USGA's Water Conservation Playbook, the club will serve as a model for water conservation, environmental stewardship, and resource efficiency, aligning with regional and statewide planning goals for sustainable recreation and community resilience.

### **Economic and Social Impact**

The golf club contributes to the local economy by attracting visitors, supporting events, and providing employment. It is an integral part of John Day's broader recreation economy, which is increasingly vital as our community works to recover and diversify following the loss of Malheur

Lumber, which has cost us over 200 jobs and an estimated \$58.1 million in annual economic loss.<sup>i</sup> Investments in water conservation will help secure the club's future, maintain its role as a community anchor, and support the city's vision for a vibrant, healthy, and attractive place to live and visit.

### **Alignment with State Priorities**

This project supports the objectives of Senate Bill 5531 and related capital funding programs, which recognize the importance of investing in public amenities, parks, and water infrastructure to create jobs, promote economic development, and enhance quality of life throughout Oregon.

We respectfully urge your support for this critical investment in the John Day Golf Club's water conservation project. Your approval will help preserve an essential community resource, support our youth, and advance the sustainability and vitality of John Day for generations to come.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Andy Day, Board Member

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<sup>i</sup> <https://bendbulletin.com/2024/09/25/closing-costs-shutting-malheur-lumber-would-take-58-million-out-of-grant-countys-economy-and-locals-are-fighting-to-keep-the-mill-open/#:~:text=Altogether%2C%20according%20to%20the%20IMPLAN,concrete%20rescue%20efforts%20have%20materialized.>