

Submitter: Diana Shapiro
On Behalf Of: water users in Oregon and our family farms
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1153

I OPPOSE this bill for many reasons. This bill starts out vague in the standards for evaluating transfer requests and by the end is overly broad and complex. SB 1153 would essentially stop the use of transfers in most places in Oregon. Transfers are a vital tool for water rights holders to change the water's place of use. New water rights are basically unavailable, and transfers are the only practical way for farmers, ranchers and irrigation districts to move water around where it is most needed and to help them to manage and use this precious resource efficiently. These changes will take the backlog at OWRD and just add to it exponentially! How will this additional workload be managed and how will it be funded? The current timeframe for transfers can be delays of many many years, these proposed changes will make this much worse. As well, legal challenges will escalate further increasing time and costs to the citizens of Oregon. This bill targets family farms and rural water users with cities being exempt from the rules while excluding irrigation districts and similar entities from the water management that they have been handling for centuries! If cities are exempt, then districts should also be exempt. They know water and are in the business of managing the delivery and use! These Special Districts are an essential part of Oregon water management and in emergencies, such as flooding, are invaluable. This bill is not a step forward for Oregon but an overly burdensome process that will set Oregon way back in their management of our water resources. Please do not pass this bill and further burden Oregon's generational family farms. Please OPPOSE SB 1153. Thank you.