

Submitter:

Pat Kaczmarek

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

Senate Committee On Rules

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB1153

As a longtime resident of Oregon and an outdoor enthusiast and environmentalist, I am asking for your support of SB 1153 and the life-sustaining streamflows it will safeguard.

The water in our streams support our fisheries and agriculture. It belongs to all of us, and is a major reason for many residents to live in our state. Our streams and rivers support exceptional biodiversity and a healthy environment that attracts visitors to our state. Those tourist support local businesses and increase awareness of the beauty and value of our state.

However, an existing loophole in water management regulations has allowed the Oregon Water Resources Department to approve applications for water right transfers without adequate consideration of whether the change will harm streamflows. Changes to water levels in a stream can hurt fish, impair water quality, and decrease scenic and recreation values.

Senate Bill 1153 safeguards our streams—and the fish, water quality, and scenic values they support—by ensuring a narrow subset of proposed non-municipal water right changes won't further diminish flows in unprotected streams. This bill also enhances existing processes for tribal consultation with a goal of identifying and addressing potential impacts to tribal interests in water.

Please vote YES on Senate Bill 1153 to safeguard streamflows in water right transfers.

Sincerely,

Pat Kaczmarek