

Submitter: Tommy Hough

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural  
Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4006

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, members of the Committee,

Please consider the many requests and concerns you are now receiving to reject HB 4006.

Oregon's water belongs to the public. Exempting irrigators in one area of the state from important water laws that every other farmer in Oregon must otherwise adhere to isn't good for the Columbia River, the Umatilla Basin, or our state.

HB 4006 undermines the Oregon Water Resources Department's ability to manage over 700,000 acres of irrigated agriculture, and sets a poor precedent.

I'm also concerned about the effect of increased agriculture on the groundwater quality of the Lower Umatilla Basin Ground Water Management Area, as increased irrigation risks increased nitrate inputs into groundwater — a crisis the state is now only beginning to address.

As author Jason Anthony has noted, "Water is life, and so the solution to water crises and water bankruptcies entails learning to live differently. Living differently, in turn, means doing more of some things and less of others. It means putting water management at the center of policy and politics, and it means learning to leave water where it is, to the greatest extent possible."

Please oppose this bill, and thank you for your kind consideration of my testimony.

All the best,

Tommy Hough