

Submitter: Robert Hunter
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or HB4006
Topic:

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

I urge you to oppose 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 adhere to is not good for the Columbia River, the Umatilla Basin, or our state. Water right holders should have to go through the transfer process to change the point of diversion or the land the right is appurtenant to. There is no reason to change the rules for a select number of water rights holders. These rules are in place to protect the public interest and other water rights holders.

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

I am 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.

Please oppose this bill.

Thank you for your consideration of my testimony.

Sincerely,
Robert Hunter