

Submitter: Marc Liverman

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:

My name is Marc Liverman. I am a private citizen and long-term resident of the Willamette River Basin who enjoys Oregon's waterways and wildlands in many ways, including fish and wildlife viewing, and for many other aesthetic, cultural, recreational, and spiritual experiences.

I urge you to oppose HB 4006. Oregon's water belongs to the public. Giving irrigators in one area of the state an exemption 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. This bill would undermine the Oregon Water Resources Department's ability to manage over 700,000 acres of irrigated agriculture and set a dangerous precedent that would threaten existing water rights holders, groundwater quality, public health, and imperiled Columbia River salmon and steelhead.

I am also concerned that increased irrigation in this specific area is likely to increase nitrate inputs into groundwater in the Lower Umatilla Basin Ground Water Management Area, a problem that is primarily driven by the application of agricultural fertilizer, getting worse, and causing increased pressure on state agencies for more aggressive, mandatory, and regulatory solutions.

Please oppose this bill.

Thank you for your interest in this important issue.

Sincerely,

Marc Liverman