



Representative Lamar Wise
Oregon House District 48
Eastmont Water Company
Capital Construction

Chair, Vice Chairs, and Members of the Committee, for the record, my name is Lamar Wise, and I represent Oregon House District 48, which includes portions of outer Southeast Portland and surrounding communities such as Happy Valley, Damascus, and Boring. I am here today in strong support of the capital construction request from Eastmont Water Company for \$3,211,603 in lottery bond funds to complete critical seismic and infrastructure upgrades.

Eastmont Water Company is a small, member-owned public water system serving 112 families in eastern Clackamas County. While the system is small, the responsibility it carries is enormous: providing safe, reliable drinking water every single day, and continuing to do so when disaster strikes.

This request focuses on essential, preventative investments: seismic upgrades to both reservoirs, reinforcement and expansion of concrete foundations through doweling and mechanical anchoring, and the replacement of 3,700 linear feet of aging 6-inch cast iron transmission main that is increasingly vulnerable to failure.

Oregon is in a seismic zone. We know this. We also know that older cast iron infrastructure performs poorly during earthquakes and extreme events. If these reservoirs or transmission lines fail, the impact is immediate and severe: families lose access to drinking water, fire protection is compromised, and public health risks escalate quickly.

And this is where the fiscal reality becomes clear. We can pay for this now, or we will pay far more later.

If this system fails, the state and local governments will be forced to step in with emergency water services for 112 families, often at significant and unplanned cost. Even more concerning, long-term failure could require millions of dollars to permanently connect these households to other regional water systems, assuming capacity even exists. Emergency responses are always more expensive, more disruptive, and less equitable than planned investments.

This request is not about expansion or growth, it is about protecting what already exists. It is about avoiding avoidable emergencies, safeguarding public health, and making the kind of prudent, forward-looking investment that Oregon taxpayers expect.

Small systems like Eastmont do not have the rate base to absorb multi-million-dollar capital upgrades on their own. Lottery bond funding allows us to ensure that rural and semi-rural families are not left behind simply because they live outside larger urban service districts.

In closing, I urge the committee to support this \$3,211,603 investment. It is a smart use of lottery dollars that strengthens seismic resilience, protects public health, avoids far greater future costs, and ensures that 112 Oregon families can continue to rely on safe, dependable water.

Thank you for your time and consideration.