



4145 NE Cully Blvd., Portland, OR, 97630 | 503-290-8570

April 30, 2025

To: House Committee On Rules

RE: Support HB 3525-A8 - Requiring Landlords to Test Tenant Wells

Chair Bowman, Vice-chairs Drazan (Dray-Zan) and Pham, members of the committee,

For the record, my name is Roselyn Poton, Water Justice Coordinator at Verde. I am also a licensed nurse, a mother, and a PhD student in Water Resources Science at Oregon State University.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony today in support of House Bill 3525-A8 on behalf of Verde.

Verde has engaged with community members across Oregon through our partnership with the Oregon Water Futures Collaborative. Through community events and interviews, we have heard from over 200 Oregonians about their water priorities. Again and again, renters' rights—particularly the need for transparency in well water quality reporting—emerged as a top concern.

This bill takes an essential step in addressing water quality and transparency concerns while protecting the health of all Oregonians. It opens a path for renters to know if their water is safe to drink and to make informed decisions that protect their health and their families. It equips the public with critical information about water quality and contamination. With access to this knowledge — including the types and levels of contaminants present — Oregonians can take informed action to safeguard both human health and Oregon's precious groundwater resources.

As a healthcare professional, my hope is that this bill will help protect people from becoming sick from preventable health issues. As a mother, I feel an even deeper responsibility to advocate for safe water for all families. As a future water scientist, knowledge is power. Knowing the quality of your water is an important first step in safeguarding you and your family's health and preventing costly conflict resolution, as well as potential litigation.

Currently, Oregon law does not require landlords to test or disclose domestic well water quality to tenants. This means that families, children, and vulnerable community members could be drinking contaminated water without even knowing it. These rental properties with domestic wells are often rural residences, and their occupants may be low-income or members of a disadvantaged community.



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Public water systems are required to meet safety standards—renters relying on private wells should not be any less protected. Safe drinking water is not a privilege; it is a basic necessity. We are disappointed to see the amendments limiting drinking water protections to only designated Groundwater Management Areas knowing that contamination concerns exist outside of these identified areas. Limiting well water testing to Groundwater Management Areas leaves many renters across the state without the information and agency to make decisions about their housing and health.

Still, we urge you to support HB 3525-A8. Thank you, as it is a step in the right direction to help protect human health and Oregon's precious groundwater while creating transparency in well water quality reporting.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Roselyn Poton, Water Justice Coordinator, Verde