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OREGONIANS FOR FOOD & SHELTER

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A non-profit coalition to promote the efficient production of quality food and fiber while protecting human health, personal property and the environment, through the integrated, responsible use of pest management products, soil nutrients and biotechnology.

April 30, 2025 House Committee on Rules

Re: Concerns with HB 3525

Chair Bowman, Vice-Chairs Drazan and Pham, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to share concerns regarding HB 3525 on behalf of Oregonians for Food & Shelter. OFS represents a diverse coalition with members from various industries within Oregon's natural resource sector, including agriculture and forestry. We advocate for science-based policy, innovation, and stewardship related to the tools and technologies essential for producing food and fiber: pesticides, fertilizers, and biotechnology.

I first want to emphasize our support for ensuring clean drinking water for Oregon residents. We agree that safe drinking water should be provided to tenants.

Our concerns with the bill relate primarily to the intended use of the data by state agencies. OFS and our partners have advocated over multiple biennia for expanded monitoring and data collection related to groundwater contamination issues in order to develop a more robust and science-based data set. Instead of those investments, we continue to see proposals that mandate private labs to report data collected by private citizens. In addition to privacy concerns, this prompts significant concerns regarding data quality given the inferences and conclusions that we see drawn from data like this, particularly lacking alternate and more robust data sources. Mandating private, independent labs to report data collected and submitted by private citizens should not be how our state agencies gather data to understand issues as critical as drinking water safety and groundwater contamination.

In the past, Oregon Health Authority has created "story maps" using results from private well testing data, highlighting entire counties on a map without noting the actual number of samples or exceedances from any given county, which in many instances was not significant enough to draw conclusions from. I hope we can agree that data of questionable and unknown quality and quantity should not be used by our state agencies to make or encourage inferences that lead to significant policy decisions, yet we do see this happen. For these reasons, OFS supports the amendments to HB 3525 coming from Representative Boshart Davis that would require this testing while limiting state agency use of the data to its intended purpose.

I also want to note the need for resources and support which will also be addressed by the pending amendment. When exceedances occur in residential drinking water and



those results become known to the state, we should be focused not only on handing out brochures, but also on ensuring that landlords and tenants can be provided with resources for water delivery, treatment systems, and well or septic repair as needed. This keeps us focused on much-needed solutions rather than just using data to tell stories.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns. We appreciate the work that has gone into this bill and ask for your support for the pending amendments from Representative Boshart-Davis that would address the concerns we have raised.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katie Murray".

Katie Murray
Executive Director