



WATER INSECURITY SOLUTIONS

Healthy Waters for Healthy People

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To: The Honorable Kayse Jama, Chair
The Honorable Daniel Bonham, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Rules
From: Curtis Cude, Principal, Water Insecurity Solutions LLC
Subject: House Bill 3525B – Requiring Landlords to Test Tenants’ Wells for Contaminants

Chair Jama, Vice-chair Bonham and members of the committee, my name is Curtis Cude and I am the Principal of Water Insecurity Solutions LLC, where we work to promote Healthy Waters for Healthy People by addressing water insecurity and public health challenges. I am submitting this written testimony in strong support of House Bill 3525B. Access to safe, clean drinking water is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of public health.

Why HB 3525B Matters

Water security means having reliable access to enough water of sufficient quality for drinking, for producing, cleaning and cooking food, for sanitation and hygiene, and for cultural and spiritual uses. Communities most affected by health inequities are also those most vulnerable to water insecurity.

HB 3525B is a necessary step forward for Oregon. This bill would require landlords to test drinking water from exempt wells for arsenic, lead, E. coli and nitrates. This bill ensures that landlords and tenants, many of whom are lower-income or members of marginalized groups, have information about household drinking water so they know what steps are needed to ensure that water is safe.

Public Health Implications

Unsafe well water poses serious risks. Consider the following:

- **E. coli contamination** can cause immediate and severe gastrointestinal (GI) illness.

- **High nitrate levels** are linked to methemoglobinemia (“blue baby syndrome”), increased miscarriage risks, thyroid disorders and cancer.
- **High arsenic levels** are linked to GI illness; heart, lung, liver, immune, nervous or reproductive system disorders; diabetes and cancer.
- **Long-term lead exposure** is associated with delay in children’s physical or mental development including decreased IQ, kidney problems, high blood pressure and cancer.

The effects of contaminated water extend beyond individual health. Families struggling with unsafe water often face additional financial burdens—purchasing bottled water, seeking medical care, or relocating when water quality is poor.

HB 3525B Amendments

The amendments to HB 3525B reflect a pragmatic and balanced approach:

- Annual testing is only required if water quality exceeds EPA Maximum Contaminant Levels; otherwise, testing is required every four years.
- Scope is limited to properties in Groundwater Management Areas already identified as facing serious groundwater quality issues.
- Landlords are not required to remediate wells, only to test and disclose results to tenants and prospective renters.
- The bill includes clear processes for accredited laboratory testing, optional delegation of sampling to tenants, standardized disclosure formats, and public health education materials from the Oregon Health Authority.

Providing tenants with drinking water test results is a modest, cost-effective intervention that can prevent costly health consequences, reduce strain on the healthcare system, and support economic stability in rural communities.

By passing HB 3525B, you are improving water insecurity in Oregon. I urge you to support this critical legislation. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



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