

April 15, 2009

Senator Vicki Walker & Representative Bob Jenson
Co-Chairs of the Ways & Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

Co-Chairs Walker & Jensen and Members of the Subcommittee:

The Special Districts Association of Oregon represents approximately 900 special service districts throughout the State of Oregon. These districts include rural fire protection, ports, water, sanitary, library, parks and recreation and several other types of districts who are governed by unpaid volunteers committed to serving their communities through public service. SDAO would like to communicate our support for water quality elements contained in the DEQ budget, SB 5521.

As you may know, the Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) program is administered by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality. The program provides, among other things, low-cost loans for the planning, design, and construction of water pollution reduction projects; including wastewater collection, treatment and disposal systems. Members of SDAO have been beneficiaries of these funds that have greatly assisted communities throughout the state in the past. With aging infrastructure and new environmental demands, it will be important to continue supporting the financial and staffing needs of this program.

The special districts are also very interested and support the continued funding and implementation of Senate Bill 737 dealing with priority persistent pollutants. As you know, DEQ has developed a list of these pollutants and they are now in the midst of receiving and reviewing public comments on that list. SB 737 requires the DEQ to report to the Legislature in June of 2010 on point, nonpoint, and legacy sources of priority persistent pollutants. Furthermore, the bill requires Oregon's largest municipal wastewater treatment plants to develop plans by 2011 to reduce persistent pollutants through pollution prevention and toxics reduction. A great deal of work has been put into this process and it will be critical for this program to continue to receive the modest funding it needs to complete and meet the deadlines outlined in statute.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Mark Landauer
Special Districts Association of Oregon
Government Affairs