



"The Voice of Oregon's Wheat Producers Since 1926"

April 17, 2009

The Honorable Bob Jenson, Vice Chair
Joint Ways and Means Sub Committee on Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE – H-481
Salem, OR 97301

Sent via Electronic Mail

The Honorable Vicki Walker, Vice Chair
Joint Ways and Means Sub Committee on Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE – S-309
Salem, OR 97301

RE: HB 5521 – Department of Environmental Quality Budget Appropriation

Dear Chairs Jenson and Walker:

The Oregon Wheat Growers League respectfully submits comments concerning the DEQ Budget Appropriation HB 5521. I understand the public hearing was scheduled for this past Wednesday, April 15 and unfortunately my schedule prevented my appearance before the Committee on that date. It is with your indulgence we offer the following comments:

First let me commend the Department of Environmental Quality, Director Dick Pederson. He and his staff are remarkable individuals and their responsiveness to requests from stakeholders is sincerely appreciated. The Agency can be commended for its willingness to work collaboratively and its effectiveness in addressing the priority concerns assigned to them by the Legislature.

Secondly, I wish to outline the following concerns regarding the budget as submitted to the Ways and Means Committee:

- It is my understanding the budget as proposed reflects the priorities outlined in the Governor's budget which will provide revenue for new initiatives including but not limited to Climate Change, Federal Air Toxics, H2O Water Quality Review for Aquifer Storage Recharge Projects and Field Burning.
- The Oregon Wheat Growers League strongly opposes the transfer of authority and budget reductions of existing agencies (e.g. Oregon Department of Agriculture and Water Resources Department) to the DEQ. The Oregon Department of Agriculture currently manages the Air Quality issues surrounding the farm practice of Field Burning. The Oregon Water Resources Department is the agency currently charged with all matters relevant to water measurement and storage in the State.
- Both of the aforementioned agencies are, without a doubt, the most closely acquainted with the 38,000 family farmers in the State. These agencies have made a tremendous effort to build relationships with the producers who generate more than \$5 Billion dollars in economic benefit to the state each year. These relationships result in positive benefits to the citizens of the state by way of safe, abundant food and clean water.

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The Honorable Vicki Walker
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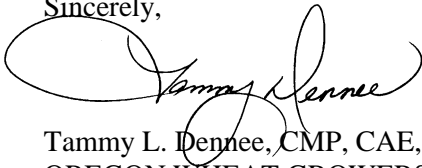
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- The issues concerning Climate Change – Cap & Trade (SB 80); Greenhouse Gas Reporting (HB 2186); and Clean Air Transportation (HB 2120) are major public policy decisions that have yet to be decided through the public process during the remaining weeks of this Legislative Session. If the Legislature delegates its authority relative to these very serious issues to a single agency, the economic results may very well be catastrophic through the loss of commerce, trade and unrealized tax revenues to the state budget.
 - The Oregon Wheat Growers League strongly urges the Ways and Means Committee to allow the aforementioned policy issues to reach their natural conclusion through the public process prior to allocating additional resources to one agency while at the same time causing other agencies to present budgets reflective of 30% reductions.

Finally, we appreciate the opportunity to bring our concerns to your attention for your awareness as we continue to navigate these uncertain economic times.

The Oregon Wheat Growers League opposes HB 5521 in its current form and urges the Legislature to further consider the unintended consequences of the proposed budget appropriation.

Thank you for your willingness to enter these remarks into the record. I will be glad to engage in further discussions and can be contacted at the number referenced herein.

Sincerely,



Tammy L. Dennee, CMP, CAE, Executive Director
OREGON WHEAT GROWERS LEAGUE

Cc: The Honorable Jackie Dingfelder
The Honorable David Nelson
The Honorable Peter Buckley
The Honorable Ben Cannon
The Honorable Brian Clem
The Honorable Chris Edwards
The Honorable Jim Thompson
The Honorable Peter Courtney, Senate President
The Honorable Richard Devlin, Senate Majority Leader
The Honorable Ted Ferrioli, Senate Republican Leader
The Honorable Dave Hunt, Speaker of the House
The Honorable Mary Nolan, House Majority Leader
The Honorable Bruce Hanna, House Republican Leader
Katy Coba, Director – Oregon Department of Agriculture
Dick Pederson, Director – Oregon Department of Environmental Quality
Phil Ward, Director – Water Resources Department