

JACKIE DINGFELDER
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 23



OREGON STATE SENATE
900 Court St. NE, S-407
Salem, OR 97301

April 4, 2012

Governor John Kitzhaber
160 State Capitol
900 Court Street
Salem, Oregon 97301

Dear Governor Kitzhaber:

The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife is considering entering into a water exchange with the City of Cascade Locks. This exchange would allow the Nestlé Corporation to move forward with their proposed water bottling facility in Cascade Locks. At this facility, Nestlé would bottle spring water currently owned by ODFW that is being used for a state-run fish hatchery on the site. As part of the proposed agreement, Nestlé would pay only the regular municipal water rate for this spring water, while the hatchery would then be fed by well water from the municipal supply.

We are opposed to the proposed pending water exchange because it allows a private, multi-national corporation to use a public resource for the economic and environmental unsustainable practice of bottled water. Further, we have concerns about the ability of existing transportation infrastructure to support the increased traffic impacts that a bottling facility would bring to the Scenic Gorge Area, as well as the long-term ability of the municipal water supply to support both the needs of the city's residents and the ODFW hatchery.

The demand for bottled water is fed by an incorrect belief that municipal water is inferior to bottled water in taste and in purity. Municipal tap water is strictly regulated by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, while lower standards often apply to bottled water. The growing consumption of bottled water raises questions about the product's economic and environmental costs. The most significant concerns involve the water and energy resources required to produce bottled water and the quantity of plastics waste that either has to be recycled or disposed of in landfills. The energy required to produce plastic bottles, along with the cost and environmental impacts associated with operating bottling facilities, and shipping bottled water, are unnecessary and wasteful. In Oregon and in the rest of the U.S., nearly everyone has access to clean tap water, making bottled water an expensive, environmentally unfriendly, and wasteful alternative to municipal tap water.

As elected officials, we work to promote affordable and sustainable options for Oregonians, while protecting public resources. This includes both supporting the use and consumption of municipal tap water, and opposing the use of publicly-owned resources like the spring water in question for private gain. Allowing the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to move forward with the water exchange would permit a state-owned resource to be used for a private business model that is unsustainable. Oregon residents have access to some of the best tap water in the world, at an affordable rate and with minimal environmental consequences. We request your action to prevent the proposed water exchange from moving forward, as it would be in the best interest of all Oregonians, and would protect a precious natural resource.

Sincerely,



Senator Jackie Dingfelder
Senate District 23



Senator Alan Bates
Senate District 3



Senator Ginny Burdick
Senate District 18



Senator Floyd Prozanski
Senate District 4



Senator Chip Shields
Senate District 22



Senator Elizabeth Steiner Hayward
Senate District 17



Representative Mitch Greenlick
House District 33



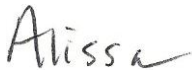
Representative Paul Holvey
House District 8



Representative Carolyn Tomei
House District 41



Representative Lew Frederick
House District 43



Representative Alissa Keny-Guyer
House District 46



Representative Phil Barnhart
House District 11