



MEMORANDUM

EUGENE WATER & ELECTRIC BOARD

Rely on us.

TO: Commissioners Brown, Carlson, Barofsky, McRae, and Schlossberg
FROM: Jason Heuser, Public Policy and Government Affairs Program Manager
DATE: February 18, 2022
SUBJECT: 2022 State Legislative Session Update

Issue

The 2022 State Legislative Session convened January 31st. This memo is to apprise the Board of the status of issues key to EWEB's adopted 2022 legislative agenda or principles.

Background

Prior to the start of each legislative session, the Board adopts general policy directives for advocacy at the Capitol, which guide the work of EWEB's lobbying activities. When political considerations test the applicability of those directives, the General Manager determines whether a fundamental shift in direction is required. The Board may be asked to reaffirm its policy or direct staff to make necessary adjustments.

Discussion

EWEB Water Resiliency Funding Request – SUPPORT – PENDING

EWEB has submitted a request for \$22.5 million in state matching funds to support the construction of a new EWEB water treatment plant on the Willamette River. The request to the Joint Ways and Means Committee has been sponsored by local Senator James Manning and EWEB staff completed project applications that were submitted to the Legislative Fiscal Office tasked with processing funding requests. EWEB staff have testified twice in support of our request at the Senate Veterans and Emergency Preparedness Committee as well as the Capital Construction Subcommittee of the Joint Ways and Means Committee. Additionally, EWEB worked with Senator Manning to submit a package of smaller water transmission and storage resiliency projects to allow some flexibility for the legislature to consider other options to support EWEB's water resiliency efforts. The state budget is typically finalized in the final days of a legislative session.

HB 4058 – Emergency Cooling – SUPPORT – PENDING

This bill would direct \$5 million to the Oregon Health Authority to create an emergency distribution program that would deliver air conditioners and air filters to homes in need during extreme heat events like the 2021 June "Heat Dome" in which 100 Oregonians perished from heat-related causes. The bill would also allocate \$10 million to the Oregon Department of Energy to create an incentive program to make it easier for vulnerable households to purchase energy-efficient heat pump cooling systems. This program would be available to EWEB customers and complement existing EWEB programs. Staff provided written testimony in support this legislation which has been approved by

the House Energy Committee and referred to the Joint Ways and Means Committee.

ALERTWildfire Camera Network Funding – SUPPORT – PENDING

ALERTWildfire is a proven system of high quality, directional cameras that enables real-time and time-lapse views of the camera feeds to critical service providers like utilities, emergency responders and the public. EWEB provided written testimony in support of a \$4.5 million funding proposal for further buildout of the system. EWEB is working with the Oregon Hazards Lab to install an ALERTWildfire camera on Smith Ridge in the upper McKenzie Valley.

Recommendation/Requested Board Action

No action is recommended. This memo is an informational update on issues identified in EWEB's 2022 State Legislative Agenda or principles.