Darrell Watson

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Dear Members of the Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources Committee,

I am writing today to express my support for SB24-005 which will take an important step towards a water-wise future. This commonsense legislation would prohibit the use of thirsty cool-weather turf grass in nonfunctional areas, which are rarely, if ever, used and encourage the use of waterwise vegetation in its place. It will reduce the amount of water used to irrigate grass while preserving turf in community green spaces, parks, and other civic and recreational places.

It is no secret that climate change and population growth will impact Colorado's water supplies, making every step to conserve water today even more important. This bill will save cities and the state time and money from installing nonfunctional turf today and from removing it in the future when the water is needed elsewhere. Further, it provides flexibility to local governments if they want to pursue more strict guidelines around the use of grass, which Denver will use to be on the leading edge of water conservation in Colorado.

Thank you for your consideration and please reach out to me with any questions.

Sincerely,

Darrell Watson

Denver City Council

District 9

House Agriculture, Water & Natural Resources
02/26/2024 01:30 PM
SB24-005 Prohibit Landscaping Practices for Water Conserv
Typed Text of Testimony Submitted

Name, Position, Representing	Typed Text of Testimony
Karen Kalavity Against themself	Plants, just like any other living organism, need water. The Carbon Cycle is the basis of all life on the planet. The CARBON CYCLE includes the scientific fact that plants take in carbon dioxide. With this, they use sunlight and convert the carbon compounds through the process of photosynthesis to produce: leaf tissues, flowers, fruit, plant produce, stems, wood, and OXYGEN! As trees and other plants are cut down, we, essentially, create greenhouse gases that warm up the atmosphere. This also happens when we release stored carbon in the form of burning fossil fuel products such as gasoline, or coal, or other organic compounds to "produce" energy. 1. The cooling effect provided by lawns as compared to rock mulch counterparts is well documented. As well, lawns can re-use recycled water better than some other plant species. In a municipality such as Westminster, where we have one of the more sophisticated water recycling capabilities in the state ... it is important to understand that some of our lawns, such as at the Municipal Building, as well as some of the city's golf courses, can actually use "grey water" for irrigation of lawns. And one estimate suggests that planting lawns and other landscape plants could reduce total U.S. air conditioning energy requirements by 35 percent. That means that we could SAVE energy by planting lawns rather than by fueling air conditioning units! 2. Trees cool the air by casting shade and releasing water vapor, and their leaves can filter out fine particulate matter (PM)—one of the most dangerous forms of air pollution, generated from burning biomass and fossil fuels. We need trees to store carbon, as well as to convert carbon dioxide into breathing and functioning landscapes that provide wildlife habitat, that cool our state's natural forests and whose roots protect our state's watershed. Instead, mature trees are being taken out by the hundreds, especially in our "Open Spaces" where they should be, instead, protected. These large trees, with their thick girth and thick bark can actually SURVIVE wildfires. 3. In fact, the urban landscape uses only 2%-4% of Colorado's water, while over 80% or more of the state's water goes to agriculture with over half of it to "Cattle and beef production". The idea that taking out lawns is going to save us from drought while pastures (by the

	thousands of acres) producing water-intensive alfalfa, etc. are left to thrive ... well that's just plain faulty math!