Congressman Blumenauer spoke last Friday to the Water Rights Conference at Willamette University. This gathering included leading natural resource thinkers from across the country who focused on the critical importance of access to safe drinking water as a human right. Blumenauer discussed both domestic and international water issues, pointing out the limitations of U.S. water resources as well as the international importance of clean drinking water and sanitation.

“I’ve spent a lot of time on a variety of issues,” said Blumenauer, “But nothing more powerfully illustrates the principles, the threats, the opportunities, and our successes than how we deal with water. It is water that is ultimately going to set the stage for the success of the US and countries around the world.” In 2005, Congress enacted Congressman Blumenauer’s bipartisan “Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act” which provided millions of people in developing nations with safe, clean drinking water. In 2009, Congressman Blumenauer developed H.R. 2030, the “Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act ” to redouble U.S. efforts to help provide an additional 100 million of the world’s poorest with first-time access to safe and sustainable drinking water and sanitation by 2015.

Blumenauer concluded, “If we do this right, we will end up saving money, improving quality-of-life, and minimizing conflicts in politics, in the courtroom, and potentially on the battlefield.”