



PROTECTING YOUR
RIGHT TO ROAM

March 3, 2013

Board of Directors

The Honorable Jeff Barker
House Judiciary Committee

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Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 2542

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Mr. Chair Barker and Members of the Committee,

Executive Director
Steph Routh

My name is Steph Routh, and I am Executive Director of Oregon Walks. Oregon Walks is a nonprofit organization founded in 1991 to promote walking and to advocate for walking conditions that are safe, convenient, and attractive for everyone.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of HB 2542, which would increase the penalty for failure to perform the duties of a driver that results in serious injury.

Oregon law is significantly stratified in regards to the suspension of a driver's license for hit and run. A license is either revoked for a period of 5 years if the crash resulted in death, or 1 year for any person injured as described in ORS 809.409. There is no intermediary period of suspension for a hit and run that may have resulted in serious injury but not death.

Failure to perform the duties of a driver after an injurious crash can have serious impacts on the victim's severity of injury and quality of life going forward. Trauma nurses refer to something called the "Golden Hour" - that precious window of time lasting from a few minutes to a few hours between a traumatic injury and access to lifesaving medical attention. Every moment that elapses between trauma and treatment can profoundly impact the likelihood of survival and certainly quality of the victim's life. When someone causes a crash and flees the scene without rendering aid, the Golden Hour is squandered.

Oregon law needs to reflect the severity of hit-and-run in our community and the relationship between hit and run and promulgation of elevation from injury to serious injury. We believe HB 2542 does that.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of an HB 2542 that increases the penalty for hit-and-run that causes severe injury. Thank you for your leadership.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steph Routh".

Steph Routh
Executive Director, Oregon Walks