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**Date:** February 11, 2014

**To:** Chair Barker and Members of the Judiciary Committee

**From:** Kay Teisl, Executive Director

**RE: Vote Yes on HB 4093**

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HB 4093 would create public records exemption for reports on proposals for mitigation related to sage grouse habitat voluntarily submitted to State Department of Fish and Wildlife.

HB 4093 simply protects ranchers from having their personal information released by Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD). It **does not** prevent the SWCD from collecting the information about ranchers' operations. It also **does not** prevent SWCD from disclosing information in the aggregate. The US Fish and Wildlife has approved accepting aggregate information for consideration of Oregon's Sage Grouse conservation efforts.

HB 4093 is good for Oregon:

- This bill would more closely align Oregon's privacy laws with the federal Privacy Act which provides necessary protections from disclosing private personal information; which our federal partners operate under; like the Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS) who work with landowners on volunteer conservation projects.
- There is no reason activist groups need specific information on individual farming operations, including addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, size of operation, etc.
- The privacy and safety concerns, as well as concerns of bio-terrorism, justify putting a limitation on publicly to disclose detailed information pertaining to Oregon ranchers entering voluntary conservation agreements.

**Please vote YES for HB 4093**