

April 21, 2015

Via: Hand Delivery

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The Honorable Brian Clem, Chair,
and Members of the House Committee on
Rural Communities, Land Use and Water

Re: HB 3283 – Bend, Oregon – Mirror Pond Restoration

Dear Chair Clem:

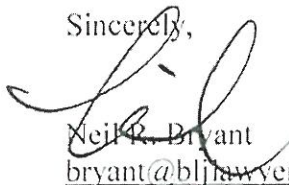
I have practiced law in Bend since 1973, and have represented the Bend Park & Recreation District for more than 10 years. When I arrived, Bend was known for its parks, mills and Mirror Pond. There have been many changes, but the parks and Mirror Pond remain a focal point. Unfortunately, due to silt accumulation behind the PacifiCorp dam, the pond has become more of a mud flat over the years. However, the community is committed to restoring Mirror Pond, thereby improving the parks, downtown Bend, and the Deschutes River.

This afternoon, you will hear testimony describing the vision to accomplish these improvements. The vision has many pieces, and it will require leadership, continued communication with many interested groups, negotiations with PacifiCorp, and financial contributions from multiple sources. A key component of the project is the redevelopment of parking lots and PacifiCorp's power substation fronting the Deschutes River. This project will make better use of the river-front property, creating a more vibrant downtown and more jobs for Bend. The requested funding will help ready the property for private-sector development. The City of Bend and the Bend Park & Recreation District are committed to this project.

I had the privilege of representing Central Oregon in the Senate for eight years, and I understand that there never is enough money for every good idea. The legislature looks for projects that can be leveraged, so that a small investment by the State can help the environment, provide recreational opportunities, and create new jobs. This has all of those elements and more.

Thank you for your consideration, and please let me know if I can answer any questions you may have after today's testimony.

Sincerely,



Neil R. Bryant
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cc: Don Horton, Bend Park & Recreation District