

Rep. Brian Clem,
Rep. Ken Helm,
Rep. Bill Post,
Rep. Vic Gilliam
Rep. David Gomberg,
Rep. Brad Witt,
Rep. Mike McLane
Oregon State Capitol
House of Representatives
House Committee on Rural Communities, Land Use, and Water
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

April 20, 2015

Re: Support of HB 3283

Dear Representatives Clem, Helm, Post, Gilliam, Gomberg, Witt, and McLane,

I am writing to express my support of the proposed plan for Mirror Pond in Bend, Oregon. I fully support the latest plan drafted by Bend Parks and Recreation and the City Council. I also support Rep. Knute Buehler's proposed legislation to provide partial funding for the project. I urge you to support HB 3283 which I think will be great for Bend and the state as a whole.

I was born and raised on the west side of Bend, scarcely five blocks from Mirror Pond. I attended Kenwood Elementary (now Highland Magnet School), which is about a block from Mirror Pond. After moving to southern California to attend college, and subsequently living there for ten years, I was fortunate enough to recently move back to Bend to raise a family. My wife, our three year old daughter, and our yet to be born son all live about five blocks from Mirror Pond, in the same house in which I was raised. Both my mother and my older brother own houses along the Deschutes River, approximately a quarter of a mile upstream from the Galveston Street Bridge. My brother and I grew up playing at Drake Park and canoeing on Mirror Pond – I hope my children will be afforded the same opportunity.

From the Great Rotary Duck Race to Munch and Music to floating the river from the Old Mill down to Drake Park, Mirror Pond and the Deschutes River provide very real economic and recreational benefits to Bend. Many cities throughout Oregon and the United States have rivers running through them, we have something entirely unique – a unique attribute we should preserve for generations to

come. The latest proposal is a great compromise that will maintain the current water level of Mirror Pond, allow for a freer flowing river and fish passage, decrease the frequency with which the Pond needs to be dredged, and ensure this economic, recreational, and aesthetic staple of our town is preserved.

Additionally, I am fully supportive of the redevelopment proposed along the river front. As a commercial real estate broker, I can easily state that a substation and parking lots are not the highest and best use of river front land. Preserving Mirror Pond and redeveloping the adjacent lands will be an economic boon for both Bend and Oregon.

HB 3283 deserves your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joel Thomas", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joel Thomas