



April 10, 2017

Oregon Conservation Network Testimony on HB 5040, OWEB Budget

Senator Lew Frederick and Representative Brad Witt, Co-Chairs
Joint Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick, Witt, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 5040, the \$117.8M budget bill for the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board (OWEB).

The Oregon Conservation Network (OCN) is coordinated through the Oregon League of Conservation Voters. OCN is a coalition of nearly 40 not-for-profit organizations throughout the state, united to advocate for pro-conservation legislation and to fight policies that threaten our state's natural legacy. OCN is powered by tens of thousands of Oregonians who belong to their membership organizations. We work to protect funding for natural resource agencies and programs, as well as policy that will ensure a better Oregon for our children.

We strongly encourage your support and approval of HB 5040, OWEB's proposed 2017-2019 budget. As the Legislature and the Governor's Office consider reductions to OWEB's budget, we encourage the consideration of OWEB's value in protecting Oregon's precious water resources. In order to preserve our state's valuable resources for future Oregonians, we must prioritize our natural resource agencies' budgets today.

Our federal administration does not appear to cherish the same values we as Oregonians hold dear. In fact, OWEB's Federal Funds will decrease from \$41,000,000 to approximately \$3,000,000 if Congress' budget mirrors the President's budget in 2018. This means we must work harder than ever at the state level to fund our natural resource agencies in order to protect our natural resources for generations to come.

In conclusion, we ask that the Subcommittee support HB 5040 and approve OWEB's proposed \$117.8M for the 2017-2019 budget. We believe OWEB's work is of vital importance to our members and the invaluable services it provides for the future of all Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Paige Spence
Director, Oregon Conservation Network
Oregon League of Conservation Voters