

From: Dave Thomson
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Cc: Sen.TimKnopp@state.or.us
Subject: Testimony in opposition to HB 2027
Date: Monday, May 08, 2017 11:43:13 AM

I am writing in opposition to Gene Whisnant's bill to prohibit the construction of a footbridge across the Deschutes River between Bend and Sunriver.

Consider the following points:

- This bridge has been included in both the city of Bend and Deschutes transportation plans for over 10 years. Voters in the Bend Parks and Recreation district have already approved funding to build a bridge. Clearly there has been ample opportunity for opponents to make a public case against the bridge.
- If the current process is allowed to continue without interference there will be additional opportunities for public input on siting and bridge design.
- While there are ecological trade-offs involved the current process allows for that discussion. Any such discussion needs to include the benefits of a non-motorized, off-street connection that will reduce driving and the major associated environmental impacts.
- The behind-the-scenes sponsors of HB 2027 are landowners along the Deschutes River. While they are casting this as closing a loophole to protect the environment, they have targeted only this one project, leaving the same "loophole" wide open for their own private projects.
- Finally, the "gut and stuff" method that representative Whisnant used to get HB 2027 through the House was clearly intended to bypass public input. One has to believe this tactic would not have been used if the bill was actually in the public interest rather than a favor for an influential constituent.

I urge the members of the Senate Environment and Natural Resources to vote No on HB 2027.

Regards,

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