

From: RICHARD
To: [SENR Exhibits](#)
Cc: [Rep Whisnant](#)
Subject: Opposition to House Bill 2027
Date: Monday, May 08, 2017 3:23:41 PM

Testimony in Opposition to HB 2027: My name is Rick Root. I am a citizen of Bend (have lived here for nearly 24-years), an avid hiker and biker, and I am a giant supporter of protecting Central Oregon's bountiful natural resources for future generations. Also, as a retired transportation planner from the city of Bend I am very familiar with the City and District – Deschutes River Trail Plans and the local supporting policy.

I OPPOSE passage of proposed **HB-2027** that would prohibit the construction of a new non-automobile bridge of the Deschutes River, located near the southwest corner of the Bend urban growth boundary (UGB).

I oppose this bill for many reasons, foremost are the following:

- **Bill preparation “process”:** This bill has been designed to quickly circumvent an already established bridge review procedure that is outlined in the *Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers Act* for this segment of the Deschutes River. The adopted statute stipulates a legitimate process for such a proposed bridge to move through for an exception to that language. The current proposed bill is frankly a fast-tracked, self-serving attempt to prohibit a bridge by nearby property owners that simply do not want it (to a large extent shielded by an expression of ‘environmental’ concerns). The bill, which has been adequately described by the local press (as a “gut and stuff” bill) has been prepared at the eleventh-hour, with very limited public testimony, which by its short public notice time table has given unjust preference only to ‘naysayers’ that were prepared to voice opposition to a bridge (and their support of the bill). This is unacceptable!
- **Bend Residents want a Bridge:** In 2012, the Bend Park and Recreation succeeded in gaining voter support of a \$29M Bond for construction of various park system improvements and amenities. While passage of a bond, clearly by itself, does not supersede Oregon law outright - it does demonstrate community support for the continued development of the Deschutes River Trail System *with a bridge*. The bond specifically called-out the bridge as a project – to be constructed at the subject location – but would be prohibited by this proposed HB, if passed. Supporters of the park district bond have repeatedly cited “the bridge” as a reason why they cast their vote *for* the bond. The point is: there is a vast majority of Bend area residents who are expecting that a fair evaluation of the bridge construction will move forward – not just a select few (non City residents) that want to cast a ‘legal veto’ and kill the project without the benefit of any further consideration.
- **Environment Sensitivity:** The Bend Park District, as well as the city of Bend, have both demonstrated, in adopted plan (protection) policy and construction practice, a sensitivity and respect for Bend's natural resources, especially the Deschutes River. Every project either agency has developed has been constructed in a manner that suitably evaluates and mitigates/limits negative impacts to the affected natural environment. Specifically - case in point - are the construction of new bike-pedestrian

bridges in recent years; the South Canyon Bridge, the First Street Rapids Bridge and the Colorado B-P Bridge (another bond project). These serve as excellent examples where bridge projects and connecting trails can be built with adequate environmental protection. This bill would not permit any further consideration of plans that would adequately address any possible environmental mitigation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely yours,

Rick Root
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