



Confederated Tribes and Bands
of the Yakama Nation

Established by the
Treaty of June 9, 1855

June 14, 2017

Sent via Electronic Mail

Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development
Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Oregon State Legislature
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SUPPORT FOR PROPOSED AMENDMENT SB 256-3 TO INCLUDE THE YAKAMA NATION IN THE
WILLAMETTE FALLS LOCKS COMMISSION

Dear Members of the Subcommittee on Transportation and Economic Development:

I write on behalf of the Yakama Nation Tribal Council Legislative Committee to offer testimony in support of Senator Richard Devlin's proposed amendments to Senate Bill 256 (hereafter "SB 256-3"), which creates a Willamette Falls Locks Commission and includes a Commission seat for a representative from a Native Nation who is signatory to the Treaty of 1855. As a signatory to the Treaty with the Yakamas of 1855 ("Treaty of 1855") with inherent sovereign and Treaty-reserved rights and resources in and around *Wa'lúmt* (Willamette Falls), the Yakama Nation has a significant interest in managing the impacts of the Willamette Falls navigation canals and locks on our resources. Including a Commission seat for a Treaty of 1855 signatory will help ensure that the Yakama Nation's federally-protected interests are represented at the Commission table.

For context, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation is a sovereign, federally recognized Native Nation. Since time immemorial the Yakama People have gathered at *Wa'lúmt* to fish, primarily for salmon and lamprey, which are central to our culture, traditions, and religion. Many Yakamas were gathered at *Wa'lúmt* during the 1855 Walla Walla Treaty Council. To this day, the Yakama People continue to exercise our Treaty-reserved rights to fish at *Wa'lúmt*, and at all usual and accustomed places. Our ancestors reserved the right to continue fishing at *Wa'lúmt* for our benefit, and now it is our duty to protect these rights for our future generations.

The Yakama Nation supports SB 256-3 because it gives our People the opportunity to speak on behalf of our rights and resources in the future management and operation of the Willamette Falls navigation canals and locks. This participation will help avoid any future disputes that may arise related to the impacts of the Willamette Falls navigation canals and locks on our fisheries and other Treaty-reserved rights and resources. Further, the Yakama Nation has significant technical expertise concerning the Willamette River and its



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fisheries that would be helpful to the Willamette Falls Locks Commission. Our participation would be mutually beneficial.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at (509) 865-5121 ext. 4336, or via email at asa_washines@yakama.com. I appreciate the opportunity to testify today. Thank you.

Respectfully,

ASA WASHINES, CHAIRMAN
LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE
YAKAMA NATION TRIBAL COUNCIL

CC: Joint Committee on Ways and Means jwmcc.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov
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