



January 15, 2017

Chair Beyer
Senate Business and Transportation Committee
Oregon Legislature
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for SB 256

Chair Beyer and Members of the Committee,

The Tourism Development Council for Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory (OMHT), the destination management organization for Clackamas County, asks for your support of SB 256.

Over that past several years a coalition of local, regional and state partners has been working with the US Army Corp of Engineers on plans to repair and reopen the Willamette Falls Locks and to develop a long term plan for their continued management and operations. Bringing this asset back online is important because of the considerable economic impacts it offers for commerce, recreation and tourism. In addition, the Willamette Falls Locks is a site with significant historical, cultural and industrial heritage relevance to the development of not only the region but the entire state.

With the support of the Oregon Legislature last session in forming a Willamette Falls State Task Force, and the effort has made considerable headway. However, more work remains to be done so additional support is needed.

SB 256 would help provide this support by establishing a Willamette Falls Locks Commission to serve as a policy-making and advisory body to identify and work through issues. The Commission will be comprised of a broad array of partners, all of whom will bring invaluable expertise and perspective to the table. SB 256 would also establish a Willamette Falls Navigation Infrastructure Program within the Oregon Business Development Department to provide support for the Commission and set up a dedicated account for executing this body of work.

We ask for your support in continuing the progress that has been made thus far and urge your yes vote on SB 256.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Danielle Cowan". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name being particularly prominent.

Danielle Cowan
Executive Director,
Oregon's Mt. Hood Territory