

Wheeler Derrick

From: Les Helgeson <les@greenhillsllc.com>
Sent: Wednesday, February 15, 2017 6:45 PM
To: HAGNR Exhibits
Cc: Wheeler Derrick; Rep.BrianClem@state.or.us; rep.susanmclain@state.or.us;
Rep.SherrieSprenger@state.or.us; rep.gregbarreto@state.or.us;
Rep.SalEsquivel@state.or.us; Rep.CaddyMcKeown@state.or.us; Rep Power; Rep Smith D;
Rep.BradWitt@state.or.us
Subject: HB 2634

Chair Clem, Members of the Committee,

My name is Les Helgeson and I reside in Beaver, Oregon. I am unable to attend the public hearing on HB 2634 which would amend the criteria by which a person would be considered disabled for purposes of wildlife laws.

Although I am a disabled person myself under Social Security/Medicare rules and would personally benefit, I am opposed to the changes proposed in this bill.

Oregon's disabled hunter program is perhaps one of the most abused statutes in our state. The proposed changes would only make matters worse due to lack of enforcement and ongoing financial shortcomings facing the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife.

ODFW has documented severe impacts to wildlife populations due to the existing disability program and have made administrative adjustments to address conservation issues. Unfortunately, HB 2634 would undo these adjustments and make a bad situation far worse than it was.

Indeed, many legitimate hunting opportunities have been significantly restricted since the advent of hunter reporting. Among other things, ODFW has documented disproportionate harvest by disabled hunters (who have also been documented many times abusing the system).

Again, although I would personally benefit, I am opposed to this bill since it would negatively affect conservation of our wildlife populations as well as any future hunting opportunities for us all.

Sincerely,

Les Helgeson
Beaver, OR