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From: Lauren Sprang <LSprang@bendparksandrec.org>
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To: HAGNR Exhibits
Subject: House Bill 4029

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
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Chair Clem, Vice-Chairs McLain and Sprenger and members of the Committee,

I am writing concerning House Bill 4029.

I was elected to the Bend Park and Recreation District board of directors in May 2017. During my campaign, the most talked about topic was connecting the Deschutes River Trail via a footbridge at the southern boundary of Bend. I also live in River Rim, the residential neighborhood closest to where the connection is being discussed.

I spoke with many people in the community and came to the conclusion that the majority of residents, including a number of my neighbors in River Rim, support connecting the Deschutes River Trail: both north-south from Tumalo to Sunriver, and also east-west to provide residents of southeast Bend with walkable access to Deschutes National Forest.

In addition to that, a portion of residents, myself included, are concerned with wildlife habitat. Thus, I hear the concerns of the environmental community.

However, I oppose House Bill 4029. The Deschutes River Trail is one of the most valued aspects of Bend—for residents, for Oregonians, and for the tourists who provide significant support to Bend's economy. I believe that with careful planning, a bridge connection can be created responsibly, mitigating the impact on wildlife.

Right now, I believe the correct approach to this issue is to step away from a conversation around a proposed footbridge and instead take a holistic look at how to:

- (1) Best connect this treasured feature for the use of residents and visitors,
- (2) Improve the degradation that has already occurred along the riverbanks in Deschutes National Forest, and
- (3) Mitigate the disruption to wildlife.

I believe the District is ready to facilitate an open conversation, including many stakeholders and viewpoints. I realize that Oregon State Parks has previously received public input on the "no bridge" rule in the Oregon Scenic Waterway Plan, but I believe that input was rushed and incomplete.

House Bill 4029 preempts completing a holistic community conversation and that is what I cannot support.

L. Sprang, Bend Park and Recreation District Board of Directors