



The Honorable Michael Dembrow, Chair
The Honorable Alan Olsen, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE
Salem Oregon 97301

Re: Public Testimony for SB 445

February 25, 2019

Dear Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Olsen and Members of the Senate Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the 4-County Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA), a consortium of agencies, non-profit groups and individuals from Clackamas, Clark, Multnomah and Washington counties in the greater Portland Metro area. The CWMA works to prevent the introduction and control the spread of harmful invasive species in our region by facilitating cooperative management among land managers. We accomplish our work by information sharing and relationship building, inventorying and assessing weeds, and conducting outreach to raise awareness about weeds among the wider public.

The 4-County CWMA supports the Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) senate bill, SB 445. Invasive species are a central threat to the economy, ecology and character of Oregon with \$1.8 billion dollars in Oregon losses if noxious weeds alone were left unchecked (according to the 2014 study "Economic Impact from Selected Noxious Weeds in Oregon"). The OISC is the only state entity tasked with developing, coordinating and implementing multi-taxa invasive species planning and response efforts across Oregon, but remains woefully underfunded 18 years after its establishment by Oregon legislators in 2001. Prevention and early detection-rapid response efforts led by the OISC cost a very mere fraction of the potential impacts invasive species could wreak on Oregon's economy.

As the only state entity tasked with coordinating all-taxa invasive species efforts in Oregon (invasive animals, plants, insects, invertebrates *and* pathogens), the OISC plays a crucial role in protecting Oregon from the devastating threats of invasive species. The Council developed the *Oregon Statewide Strategic Plan for Invasive Species (2017-2027)* and the *Oregon Statewide Action Plan for Invasive Species (2017-2019)* to strategize 1) Prevention, 2) Early Detection-

Rapid Response, 3) Control & Management, 4) Education & Outreach, and 5) Coordination & Leadership invasive species efforts across the State. Oregon is under constant pressure of newly introduced invasive species, with numerous pathways identified in these statewide plans, including industrial shipping, rail movement, air travel, truck transport, and people. Whether it's gypsy moth arriving from Asia on imported steel, Japanese beetle hitching a ride on outdoor furniture from an out-of-state mover, or quagga and zebra mussels coming in on contaminated boats, Oregon is under constant threat of new invaders that would devastate Oregon should they become established. **Imagine Oregon without conifer trees due to constant gypsy moth defoliation, collapsed vineyard, nursery and orchard industries due to insatiable Japanese beetle appetites, and waterbodies and irrigation canals choked and clogged with quagga and zebra mussels. The natural and industrial backbones of Oregon are at risk.** With Oregon consistently one of the top moving destinations for cross-country relocations, these threats have never been more critical.

To continue to be effective, it is crucial that the Oregon Invasive Species Council receive funds for 1) coordination, 2) invasive species management grants, and 3) emergency control efforts. Senate Bill 445 requests funds for this three-pronged approach to preventing, managing and controlling invasive species in Oregon. In addition, SB 445 seeks more equitable Council representation across the State and requires biannual reporting of Council activities to the Oregon legislature. We ask the Senate Committee to give full consideration to SB 445 to help protect the character and economic livelihoods of Oregon.

Sincerely,



Mitch Bixby

Botanic Specialist, City of Portland

Chair, 4-County Cooperative Weed Management Area

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