

Chair Dembrow and members of the committee:

I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 303. The bill's intent is to allow a landowner damage tag to be used on an adjacent property; the existing program already allows the owner of the adjacent property to enroll in the damage program and acquire damage tags themselves.

The existing relevant portion of the statute:

Sec. 3

(2) Provides landowner damage tags only for areas where elk are currently causing damage, where there has been a history of elk damage coupled with actions to alleviate elk damage or where the department has designated the area as an elk deemphasis area.

This bill would have the undesired side-effect of allowing damage tags to be used on properties that have no actual damage currently occurring or where there has been a history of elk damage. That side-effect is in direct opposition to why the SW Elk Damage Pilot Program going statewide was supported by Oregon Hunters Association in the first place; that damage tags would only be given out for those properties actually having damage issues.

Steve Hagan

Northwest Director At-Large, Oregon Hunters Association