



HUMANE VOTERS | OREGON

Testimony of Humane Voters Oregon on HB 2834
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

May 14, 2019

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

Humane Voters Oregon (previously known as Humane Oregon) is a nonprofit organization that works in Oregon's political process and elections to promote humane treatment of animals. We have board members from several different animal welfare organizations but are not affiliated with any other state or national organization.

Humane Voters Oregon supports House Bill 2834-A, which would require the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) to adopt a Wildlife Corridor Action Plan and require the Oregon Department of Transportation (ODOT) to develop a plan to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions where the ODFW plan shows wildlife corridors intersecting with public roads. These plans would be good first steps toward making the most of Oregon's wildlife habitat by restoring and protecting connectivity among habitats. They also would be good first steps toward reducing the number of vehicle collisions with wildlife, which obviously are harmful to people as well as animals.

As a suggestion for improvement, we believe the bill should be more ambitious – along the lines suggested in the original bill (Section 3(2)) – in requiring ODOT to incorporate highway crossing structures for wildlife (generally overpasses and underpasses) in significant new highway construction projects where significant wildlife-vehicle collisions are occurring or likely to occur. According to ODOT's written testimony to the House Committee on Natural Resources, wildlife-vehicle collisions kill approximately two people every year (and undoubtedly many animals). Also according to ODOT's testimony, wildlife highway crossings reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions by about 85 percent. These facts present a compelling case for crossing structures. Given that, HB 2834-A should require ODOT to do more than just "consider" crossing structures as part of significant new highway projects. (Section 5(2).)

Thank you for considering our comments.

Brian Posewitz

Brian Posewitz
Board Member/Administrator