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TESTIMONY –
HB 2069
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee
January 26, 2021

Chair Witt and Members of the Committee,

My name is John O’Keeffe. I am Third Generation on the 5 generation O’Keeffe Ranch located in Adel, Oregon.

I have had the honor to serve as the President of the Oregon Cattlemen’s Association in 2016-17 and am now among the long line of past Presidents who have served this Association since its formation in 1913.

I am a Candidate Conservation Agreement Holder for Sage Grouse on BLM permit;

I am a Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances holder on O’Keeffe Ranch Property;

I am the current President of the Warner Valley Rangeland Fire Protection Association;

I am a member of the Local Implementation Team for Sage Grouse Conservation Lakeview District; and

I am a Landowner Representative on Oregon’s Sage Con Effort.

As producers go forward with managing development on Oregon’s high desert in conjunction with Sage Grouse conservation, we will need mechanisms to assure that we are able to match mitigation funds with worthwhile projects.

That is what HB 2069 does, once a development project has been approved rather than doing a developer funded mitigation project just for the sake of checking the box, funds can be placed in the fund. As Sage Grouse conservation needs are identified, these needs can be ranked and prioritized by wildlife biologists. The fund will help make money available for the most important projects that will be the most beneficial. This is the approach that will do the most good out on the ground and most likely prevent the need to list the species.

Thank you for accepting my testimony for the record in support of HB 2069.

John O’Keefe
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