



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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Chair Witt and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources:

For the record I am Al Elkins representing the Oregon Hunters Association (OHA). I am here today in support of HB 3187, the bill that establishes the Wildlife Council. The mission of OHA is protecting Oregon's wildlife, habitat, and hunting heritage. OHA's current focus is ensuring sound and scientific management of all huntable wildlife species.

HB 3187 is consistent with OHA's mission. The bill establishes a Wildlife Council and the requirements for membership to that Council and directs the Council to formulate a plan toward educating the public on the importance and benefits of hunting and fishing in wildlife management. It also establishes a fund from which to pay council members expenses.

It has become apparent over the years that every day we are challenged by federal and state legislation or regulations that focus on the elimination or changing of how one species of wildlife or another is managed. This challenge brings forth the need to educate the public on the importance and benefits of hunting and fishing for wildlife management. When it comes to wildlife management it is apparent that sound decision making based on science and not emotion is needed to make decisions that will impact wildlife in a positive way.

HB 3187 will do just that as the bill establishes a Wildlife Council that will in play a major role in educating the importance of sound wildlife management. The bill in part calls for:

- Develop and implement, with a third-party marketing or advertising agency, a comprehensive media-based public information program to promote the essential roles of hunting and fishing in wildlife conservation and to educate the public about hunting and fishing.
- The program must inform the public that hunting, and fishing are: (A) Necessary for the conservation, preservation, and management of this state's natural resources. (B) A valued and integral part of the cultural heritage.

It is the opinion of OHA that if this bill becomes law, we can begin to educate the public and lawmakers on the importance of sound decision making based on actual science that will help preserve Oregon's important resource: wildlife.

OHA encourages you to support the bill as written.

That concludes my testimony, I will be glad to answer any questions.