

6/20/2023

RE: In Support of HB 2527

Dear Chair Meek and members of the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue,

On behalf of the West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District, I urge you to please vote YES to HB 2527.

This bill received fully bipartisan and *unanimous* support in the House. Its purpose is to make available the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation and Management Program once again.

This bill is the result of over 5 years of collaborative work between ODFW and many Soil & Water Conservation Districts to reduce barriers and streamline programmatic requirements for Oregon landowners to implement critical habitat protection and restoration without losing their agricultural or forest deferred tax status. Without this option, landowners that may want to take out of production a portion of their land and dedicate that land to critical habitat, which could also result in improved carbon sequestration and water quality, are unable to do so without losing funds.

We know that our agricultural producers run their businesses with very low margins. We believe that any opportunity that we can offer to support the local economy while also supporting wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration, and water quality is a win for everyone.

Please vote yes on HB 2527.

Thank you,

Terri Preeg Riggsby, MPA
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President, Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
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she/her