

## Portland Audubon Testimony in Support of SB 812

Good Morning Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, Members of the Committee. For the record my name is Kyle Linhares on behalf of the Audubon Society of Portland.

Portland Audubon has advocated for Oregon's wildlife and wild places for more than 100 years. Their mission is to inspire all people to love and protect birds, wildlife, and the natural environment upon which life depends.

It is my privilege to appear today in support of SB 812.

Drone use is rapidly increasing nationwide<sup>1</sup>. Meanwhile Oregon's tens of thousands of acres of state, county, and local parks provide critical habitat for dozens of bird species and millions of individual birds. The spike in drone activity has led to increasing disturbances of birds and other wildlife populations. These increasingly frequent disturbances have been documented to negatively impact bird welfare and reproductive success.

For example, the Oregon Black Oystercatcher Project, coordinated by Portland Audubon, documented a weekly average of 3 drone disturbances at active oystercatcher nests along the Oregon coast in 2021<sup>2</sup>. And in one dramatic 2021 case from California, a drone crash caused an entire colony of 3,000 Elegant Terns to abandon 1,500 active nests.<sup>3</sup> In short, drones and birds are a bad mix; and the birds were here first.

Portland Audubon supports a precautionary approach to regulating recreational drone use given that it is a relatively new phenomenon whose impacts are just beginning to be fully understood. Accordingly we feel that allowing local governments to restrict drone activity on park land is a reasonable and prudent step. Therefore we respectfully urge your support for SB 812. Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> 1 FAA, FAA Aerospace Forecast Fiscal Years 2021–2041, [https://www.faa.gov/data\\_research/aviation/aerospace\\_forecasts/media/Unmanned\\_Aircraft\\_Systems.pdf](https://www.faa.gov/data_research/aviation/aerospace_forecasts/media/Unmanned_Aircraft_Systems.pdf) Drone market outlook in 2022: industry growth trends, market stats and forecast, INSIDER INTELLIGENCE (Feb. 2, 2022) (“total global shipments to reach 2.4 million in 2023 – increasing at a 66.8% compound annual growth rate”), <https://www.businessinsider.com/drone-industry-analysis-market-trends-growth-forecasts>

<sup>2</sup> Portland Audubon Unpublished Research

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.audubon.org/news/a-drone-crash-caused-thousands-elegant-terns-abandon-their-nests>