

Submitter: Damian Fagan
On Behalf Of: HB2980
Committee: House Committee On Climate, Energy, and Environment
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2980

Greetings,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on HB2980 directing the Oregon State Department of Fish and Wildlife to establish a Wildlife Stewardship Program.

As an Oregon resident and wildlife enthusiast, this program would provide grant funding opportunities to wildlife rehabilitation centers which exist to provide care and treatment of injured or sick wildlife species. There aren't enough centers to meet the need and the centers that do exist do not receive public funding, despite providing services that the public expects. Who hasn't had a vehicle collision with a deer or owl or small mammal or found a sick or injured bird that is in need of care? Since the state does not have enough personnel or centers to provide this care, HB 2980 would create a great partnership between the State and these private wildlife hospitals.

In addition, HB 2980 would allocate funding for three new ODFW biologists and targeted outreach for wildlife services. Think Wild, a licensed Wildlife Control Operator here in Bend, provides services for mitigating wildlife conflicts with landowners, including exclusion fencing and coexistence services. Think Wild has become the "go-to" wildlife control services in this region, filling a critical gap between landowners and wildlife conflicts which the state can not meet.

HB 2980 would foster this support for wildlife stewardship, education, and narrowing the gap of funding needs compared to the resources currently available. I strongly urge you to support this bill and its investment in Oregon wildlife.

Sincerely,
Damian Fagan
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