



February 23, 2025

Oregon House Natural Resources Committee
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Testimony in Support of House Bill 2342 and House Bill 2977

Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger-McDonald, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the American Sportfishing Association (ASA), I am writing to express our strong support for House Bills 2342 and 2977. ASA represents the recreational fishing industry, including manufacturers, retailers, and anglers who contribute significantly to Oregon's economy and natural resource conservation efforts.

Recreational fishing is a major economic driver in Oregon, generating approximately \$1.4 billion annually and supporting over 12,000 jobs across the state. A fully funded Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) provides exponential economic benefits, supporting businesses ranging from bait and tackle shops to guides, outfitters, and individual anglers.

While ASA supports increasing fishing and hunting license fees under HB 2342, we recognize that ODFW's services extend far beyond these activities. However, we are concerned that hunters and anglers disproportionately bear the financial burden of funding the agency. A more equitable funding model should be explored to ensure that all Oregonians contribute fairly to the conservation and management of the state's natural resources. In this regard, we strongly support HB 2977 as a means of diversifying funding sources and reducing the financial strain on the hunting and fishing community.

Additionally, we urge the Legislature to mitigate potential financial barriers that could arise from increased license fees, particularly for older adults, and young anglers. Ensuring discounted rates and affordability measures will help maintain broad public participation in recreational fishing and preserve Oregon's strong outdoor heritage.

We urge the committee to pass HB 2342 and HB 2977.

Sincerely,

Larry Phillips
Pacific Fisheries Policy Director
American Sportfishing Association