

Submitter: Ginger Berryman  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3362

To the Joint Committee,

Nobody likes roadkill... Seriously, though, as an elopement photographer who drives all over the state during my busy season, I see a ton and it makes me sad every time. It is long past time that Oregon start taking this issue seriously.

Oregon's wildlife is one of the many reasons people visit the PNW-- it is a tourism draw. Whether our bears or pronghorns or plethora of mustelid species. It is a nearly universal delight to see animals in their wild habitat. But the opposite is also true, which is maybe why about 86% of OR voters are in favor of more wildlife crossings.

And if your empathy doesn't extend beyond our own species, wildlife collisions cause people to die each year. Injuries and psychological damage occur as a result as well. 3 years ago, my friend struck an elk with her car on highway 20, just north of Tumalo. Her car was damaged to the point where she could not drive away from the scene, and the elk did not die immediately on impact. She was more or less forced to stick around and witness a slow, brutal death of a very large and innocent animal. It was an incredibly traumatizing experience and still haunts her to this day.

That stretch of highway is rife with opportunities to build wildlife crossings, and it would make a huge difference. I have also been stopped by elk along that commute, back when I worked at a bakery in Sisters. I need to be there early, driving in icy conditions, in the dark... a recipe for disaster that thankfully never came to fruition. But I drive like a grandma in the snow, which is to say, safely... many do not. Those big-ass 18 wheelers FLY by me on highway 97. So dangerous, and you know they're not stopping for deer... they simply can't.

I am in full support of this bill, which will provide Oregon with a means of funding these much needed wildlife crossings. Not only will it save lives, but it'll save Oregonians money and stress from these collisions (and near collisions, which can be just as traumatic, and the stats on those are nearly impossible to gather... how do you get records for folks slamming on their brakes and NOT hitting something?)

Please do the right thing and vote to pass this bill.

Sincerely,  
Ginger Berryman