

Submitter: Alyssa Nelson  
On Behalf Of:  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB1131

My name is Alyssa Nelson, Director of Operations at Chintimini Wildlife Center. I am speaking on behalf of Chintimini Wildlife Center in support of SB 1131.

Chintimini's Wildlife Hospital accepts native birds, mammals, amphibians, and reptiles for the purpose of rehabilitation and release. Our patients are split between Corvallis, Salem, Eugene, and more than 100 distinct towns in the Willamette Valley area. We see animals from rural, urban, and suburban areas, and interact with community members from those areas 365 days a year.

We are an education center as well and we have been working in our community to increase awareness of how to safely coexist with wildlife. Each year, our 2-person Education team does more than 200 presentations on and off-site, including with school groups, police officers, local tribes, and more. Each of these presentations includes information on what to do and what not to do when faced with injured or sick wildlife, and how to protect wildlife and the shared environment. Wildfires are becoming more prevalent across the globe, displacing and harming local wildlife. Unfortunately, our region has been impacted by the increase in wildfires, and we want to serve as a resource for education and help the public know what to do when they find wildlife impacted by fires.

In 2024, we received over 11,000 calls to our wildlife hotline, providing a resource for informing the public on what to do should they encounter sick or injured wildlife. We accepted 2,215 patients into our wildlife hospital last year, which was a four-year high and the third-most since our founding in 1989. We do this all with only 3 full-time Rehabilitation Staff members, a part-time veterinarian, and a wildlife hospital over 30 years old, which was never intended to be a permanent option. In the last 10 years, two rehabilitation centers have closed down near us, resulting in an expansion of our service area to be the only resource of its kind for the public and wildlife in the Willamette Valley. We currently receive no state or federal funding, and subsist only on the generosity of our community and private grants.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony and strongly urge you to support Senate Bill 1131.

Thank you for your time.