



**Mission:** FACT Oregon empowers families, youth, and communities to navigate disability systems, advocating together for disability justice and policy change so that people with disabilities have what they need to thrive at home, in school, and in their communities.

April 15, 2025

Chair Jeff Golden

Vice-Chair Todd Nash

Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

RE: **Support for HB 2163** – Classifying Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (IDD) as Persons with Disabilities Under Wildlife Laws

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash and Members of the Committee,

FACT Oregon is a statewide, family-led nonprofit organization working toward a future where communities are accessible, inclusive, and empower the self-determination of people with disabilities. Since 2009, we have served as a Family Network supporting families of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) in the larger metro area, with our current focus in Multnomah and Washington counties. As a Family Network, we work to support families to thrive in accessible and welcoming communities.

All families in Oregon should have the ability to enjoy the natural beauty of our state. Yet, families and individuals that have an intellectual or developmental disability (IDD) do not qualify as a person with a disability under current outdated definitions, preventing them from participating in angling or harvesting shellfish. We strongly support HB 2163, which would modernize the definition of disability for the purposes of angling and shellfish harvesting permits, removing unnecessary barriers that have unintentionally excluded individuals with IDD.

There are thousands of individuals with IDD in Oregon who could benefit from this change in legislation. HB 2163 ensures accessibility to outdoor recreational opportunities for individuals and families with IDD, fostering inclusion and affirming their right to participate fully in community life. For many of the families we serve, these activities play an essential role in building relationships, promoting independence, and strengthening community connections. By updating the disability permit definition, all Oregonians, regardless of ability, can enjoy the benefits of nature and recreation.

We urge you to support HB 2163 and help us create a more welcoming Oregon. Your leadership in passing this bill will make a significant difference in the lives of many families and individuals with IDD.

Thank you for considering this testimony and for your leadership in making Oregon a state where everyone has the opportunity to participate and thrive.

Christy Reese

Executive Director, FACT Oregon