

Submitter: DJ Fletcher
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2977
Date: June 24, 2025

Re: 2025 HB 2977-A "Recovering Oregon's Wildlife Fund Subaccount"

To: The Oregon Senate Committee on Rules

Dear Chair Jama, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Committee Members:

I am asking for your support of HB 2977-A, the bill to secure long-term, dedicated, and stable funding for wildlife conservation in our state.

I have submitted previous testimony, and after watching your committee's Public Hearing on June 24, 2025, I am writing again to draw attention to the urgent need for stable funding of ODFW SWAP work to enable ODFW to focus on managing native fauna and flora and habitats in need of conservation.

Funding from the HB 2977-A revenue would help prevent declines of at-risk species, reverse declines where possible, and enhance biodiversity of native plants and animals. There is dire need for stable funding in order to manage threats and damage from natural and human-made impacts such as invasive species, climate change, natural disasters, and even wildlife tourism and outdoor recreation itself.

I would like to see a future in which the travel & hospitality industry would be proud to proclaim that our State donates a portion of TLT specifically to promote Oregon as a model of conservation. Again, I tell you sincerely that my out-of-state visitors, who have turned into frequent Oregon eco-tourists and wine tourists, let me know that they would "gladly pay more TLT to protect wildlife!" They echo what Rep. Mark Owens said when he testified at the June 24th hearing: The TLT increase in, say, a \$200 hotel, "adds less than a cup of coffee."

I realize that travel & hospitality marketing/PR folks such as Metro Portland, ORLA, Travel Portland, and others, especially in the Portland area, express concern about any rise of cost for conference events in their area. Yes, conferences bring a lot of revenue and tourist dollars into Oregon. But if it is about revenue for Oregon, my thought is why not more bring conferences to the Southern Oregon region? It has an international airport in Medford; access to Interstate-5; world-class outdoor recreation opportunities; unique cultural events like the Oregon Shakespeare Festival; many hotels and lodging accommodations; and an overall much lower cost for conference

hosting and for attendees/tourists.

I take the long view on how to keep Oregon tourism healthy: Tourists will enthusiastically choose to keep coming back and exploring more places -- and spending more dollars -- if, and only if, the State preserves its wildlife and natural environments.

Please support HB 2977-A.

Thank you,
DJ Fletcher