

Dear Chair Nathanson, House Committee on Revenue

My name is Robyn Draheim and I am the coordinator of the Oregon Invasive Species Council. The role of the Council is to act as a catalyst on invasive species issues, providing leadership and facilitating collaborative efforts across our wide network of members.

Invasive species are animals, plants, and microorganisms that are not native to Oregon and once here can reproduce so vigorously that they replace our native species. They pose a threat to key sectors of Oregon's economy that depend upon natural resources and native ecosystems. Agriculture, forestry, tourism, and water resource infrastructure, including hydropower facilities, are at serious risk of being adversely impacted by invasive species. Unchecked, invasive species individually and collectively have the potential to imperil public health and to transform ecosystems, resulting in widespread economic and environmental devastations.

The State of Oregon is facing an unprecedented threat from invasive species, including freshwater mussels that could alter how we recreate in our lakes and rivers, insect pests like spotted lanternfly that could be devastating to our wineries and fruit producers, and terrestrial weeds that continue to take over degraded habitats turning them into high fire-risk corridors.

Charged with protecting Oregon's natural resources and economy by planning and leading a coordinated and comprehensive campaign to prevent the introduction of invasive species and eradicate, contain, or manage existing invasive species in Oregon, the Council was established by the Oregon Legislature in 2001 (ORS 570.755). The Council's primary role, as designated, is to convene and coordinate Oregon's invasive species leadership to conduct a coordinated and comprehensive effort to prevent the entry of invasive species. This focus on statewide strategic planning distinguishes the Council's role from the roles of other state agencies.

As established in statute, Council responsibilities include management and oversight of:

- OISC Invasive Species Control Account
- Statewide Invasive Species Strategic Action Plan
- Education and Outreach Grants
- Education of the Public and Policy Makers
- Statewide Invasive Species Reporting Hotline

As proposed in HB4134, additional funding for council operations would allow the Council to increase its support for its statutory responsibilities, including supporting the State Reporting Hotline (which receives many 100s of reports each year including the second detection of an invasive mitten crab in the Willamette River in October, 2025) and potentially offering competitive Education and Outreach Grants on a recurring basis. The 2025 Invasive Species Education and Outreach Grant, made possible by one-time funding in 2024 through SB5701, represented the first-ever

state-funded grant program overseen by the Council. We received over \$700,000 in requested funds from 34 qualified applications representing all regions of the state and were able to award \$170,000 to support 10 projects that increase awareness of the impacts, spread, prevention, detection, and management of invasive species issues in Oregon.

Funding for the Council's Invasive Species Control Account will allow the Council to continue to allocate meaningful resources to emergency control projects. With the estimated cost of invasive species impacts in Oregon ranging from \$0.5B - \$3B annually, the Invasive Species Control Account allows the Council to facilitate eradication or control of new or expanding infestations by providing grants on an as needed basis and saves Oregon money by providing funds when they are most likely to contribute to success.

Thank you for your time,

Robyn Draheim
Coordinator
Oregon Invasive Species Council