



# COQUILLE INDIAN TRIBE

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## Coquille Indian Tribe Testimony

### Senate Bill 1590 (2026)

The Coquille Indian Tribe appreciates the opportunity to provide comments to Senate Bill 1590, which would prohibit the State of Oregon from providing support to what is described as the “privatization” of federal lands located within the State’s exterior boundaries.

The Coquille Indian Tribe opposes this bill in its current form for several reasons that I will describe for you. However, we stand ready to work with you to develop legislation that we expect will be more acceptable to us and other Oregon tribes.

We have procedural and substantive concerns with the current draft bill. Regarding procedure, we think this legislation implicates tribal interests and therefore is an excellent candidate for tribal consultation. The State of Oregon hosts nine tribes, each with a unique and complex relationship with the federal lands located in their respective geographic areas of interest. Some tribes assert treaty rights in these lands. Other tribes prioritize recovering lands lost due to federal policies such as termination or other historic reasons.

One thing that we do know is that all of these federal lands used to belong to the Coquille Indian Tribe and the other 8 Federally Recognized Tribes in Oregon, so we have a continuing interest in them. For this reason, the Coquille Tribe urges you to coordinate and consult with the nine tribes of Oregon before advancing this bill or any other version of this bill to understand our unique perspectives as Sovereign Nations.

We also have comments regarding the substance of the legislation:

1. In Subsection 1(1) the term “private person” is undefined. No definition is found in Chapter 174 of the Oregon Revised Statute. This raises several questions, such as: does this legislation apply to nonprofits, government-owned entities, tribally-owned entities (nonprofit or for-profit), federally-chartered entities and other forms of organization.
2. In Subsection 1(1), this text would appear to prohibit even simple boundary line adjustments resulting from survey errors or riparian changes. We are also unclear about how rights of way such as access easements and forest roads would be impacted since these are typically interests in real estate.

3. In Subsection 1(1), it is unclear whether State resources could be used to assist a party other than the federal government with the “sale or transfer of real property”.
4. In Subsection 1(1) it is unclear if the prohibition only applies to the specific act of transferring ownership or if it extends into activity beyond the conveyance and recording of a deed. Does it apply to all activity preceding and following a sale, such as a permit transfer or an associated lease issued by the Department of State Lands, for example?
5. In Subsection 1(2) we are curious why these four federal agencies were selected. Also one listed agency is listed as being within the U.S. Department of the Interior but this subsection includes three such agencies.
6. In Subsection 1(3) we need to better understand the significance and scope of these four listed exceptions. Although we appreciate the consideration of exception 1(3)(d), in our view the proposed language fails and needs improvement.
  - a. First, this exception applies only to lands already held in trust by a tribe. This exception as written makes little sense. Lands cannot be held in trust by a tribe until they are transferred, and even with the proposed exception here the statute appears to prohibit the state from supporting such a transfer. Also, the exception should include lands held in fee by a tribe because that is often the only way that lands can be transferred from the federal government. Tribes receiving such lands would need to file a subsequent application to transfer them into trust. For this reason we would propose that this exception apply to any lands transferred to a tribe.
  - b. Second, this section should only apply to lands transferred to one of the nine tribes of Oregon and should not create an inadvertent opportunity for an out of state tribe to acquire federal lands in Oregon. There is precedent for this request, such as:
    - i. Senate Bill 412 (2011), ““Tribal government” means a federally recognized sovereign tribal government whose borders lie within this state.”
    - ii. **285C.306 Reservation enterprise zones and reservation partnership zones.** (1) As used in this section, “eligible Indian tribe” means each of the Burns Paiute Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians, the Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians of Oregon, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, the Coquille Indian Tribe, the Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Tribe of Indians and the Klamath Tribes, as long as each remains a federally recognized Indian tribe.”
  - c. Third, this section uses the imprecise phrase “a member of a tribe.” This should be clarified to mean an enrolled member of one of the nine tribes of Oregon.

For these various reasons, the Coquille Indian Tribe must regrettably oppose this legislation. We urge you to use the tools available through the Oregon Legislative Commission on Indian Services before advancing this legislation or any version of this legislation, as well as respect the commitment of Consultation with Oregon's 9 Federally Recognized Tribes before making a decision that will impact us. We will commit to working with you to develop revisions addressing these issues. When Government to Government Consultation is upheld it leads to better outcomes for all Oregon stakeholders.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments.

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The Coquille Indian Tribe