



HUMANE VOTERS | OREGON

Testimony of Humane Voters Oregon on House Bill 2747
House Committee on Natural Resources

February 18, 2019

Chair Witt and Members of the Committee:

Humane Voters Oregon (previously known as Humane Oregon) is a nonprofit organization that works in Oregon's political process and elections to promote humane treatment of animals. We have board members from several organizations within the animal welfare community but are not affiliated with any other state or national organization.

Humane Voters Oregon opposes House Bill 2747 because it would result in selected special interests being over-represented on the Fish and Wildlife Commission while most Oregonians continue to be under-represented.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission oversees management of all fish and wildlife in the state for all people of the state. *See* ORS 496.012; ORS 496.004(19). Eighty-eight percent of that wildlife is not hunted, trapped or fished. (ODFW website, dfw.state.or.us/wildlife/diversity/.) Ninety-two percent of the people in the state do not hunt. Eighty-three percent do not fish. (2019-2021 ODFW Budget Briefing Paper, p. 23.)

The Commission makeup should reflect these facts with more robust representation of average Oregonians who may not hunt or fish, but who care generally about things such as preservation of wildlife for its own sake and humane treatment of animals. HB 2747 would go the opposite direction. It would enshrine specific consumptive interests such as fishing, hunting, farming and logging. It would ignore numerous other categories of interest and the general interests of average Oregonians. Those interests could not effectively be represented through the proposed single seat for "an environmental or conservation organization." That position would be severely outnumbered. "[E]nvironmental or conservation organization" also could be in the eye of the beholder. For example, a hunting or fishing organization could be called an "environmental or conservation organization."

HB 2747 also would take the Commission further away from representing Oregonians proportionally by geography. Presently, most commissioners are from specific Congressional districts, which have approximately equal numbers of people. The exceptions are the two seats east and west of the Cascades, respectively, even though 75 percent of the state's population is west of the Cascades. HB 2747 would retain that undemocratic allocation while apparently allowing all other appointees to come from a single part of the state. For that reason, too, HB 2747 should not be passed.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Brian Posewitz

Brian Posewitz
Board Member/Administrator

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