

RE HB 2747, "Revises requirements for membership on State Fish and Wildlife Commission."

Testimony, Al LePage, Eugene, OR

Chair Witt , members of the committee, thank you.

In a democracy it's absolutely necessary that laws be consistent with democratic principles. Given this bill proposes specific membership categories to serve on the Commission itself, these should also be consistent with our representative democracy.

However, given the bill's existing membership categories for fishing, hunting, timber, and agriculture, and only one membership for the environment, this bill is definitely "unbalanced" relative to "consumptive" and "non-consumptive" uses.

A case can be made for other membership categories, the rationale specifically based on consumptive and non-consumptive wildlife recreation uses, in plain language, fishing and hunting compared to wildlife viewing.

The best available data,* which I have provided, and its emerging trends relevant to Oregon over the last decade, shows and clearly suggests that the number of people involved in wildlife viewing far exceeds even the combined totals for fishing and hunting together, and likewise economically, that wildlife viewing also surpasses both hunting and fishing, when each activity is taken separately.

So developing membership categories based on consumptive and non-consumptive categories would appear to be valid and justified.

Therefore, at least half of Commission membership should be representatives aligned with non-consumptive recreation, that is, wildlife viewing.

So here's a proposal also consistent with achieving the kind of balanced representation characteristic of a democracy.

Membership would include consumptive use organizations, businesses, or individuals focused on "wildlife management" specifically representing (1) fishing, (2) hunting, (3) timber, and (4) agriculture; and non-consumptive use organizations focused on "wildlife conservation" and representing (1) marine habitats, (2) wildlife species, (3) forest preservation, and (4) a conservation biologist, finally, a tribal representative.

Given my limited speaking time, I've included in my written testimony the importance of including a conservation biologist, draft legal definitions for "wildlife management" and "wildlife conservation," and the fact that the membership categories here offered are consistent with the existing mission of ODFW.

[The conservation biologist member is extremely important to include, since they would not only act as an ever-present reality check scientifically for all members of the commission, but also balance out the wildlife management approach of the agency which has historically clearly had a greater focus on goals related to fishing and hunting. Therefore, a conservation biologist focused on the goals of conservation biology relative to ecosystem health and to ensure the protection of biodiversity, with the goal of wildlife conservation, seems highly appropriate.

(Continued on next page)

And let me clarify here between wildlife management and conservation management.

“Wildlife management” focuses on serving humans by actively modifying habitats or attempting to control various species populations, and is based upon science.

“Wildlife conservation” focuses on serving wildlife by protecting, preserving and enhancing its biodiversity, the variety and variability of life in terms of genetics, species and ecosystems, and habitats, based upon the principles of ecology.

Technically, wildlife management can include wildlife conservation, however, in the interest of legal definitions for legal statute, I offer these specific definitions such that membership would be truly representative in terms of the consumptive and non-consumptive categories specified.

I also note, especially in this regard, and why it is most likely included in wildlife management, that wildlife conservation also serves humans, and further, that healthy ecosystems with it's associated biodiversity are not only vital to the consumptive uses of humans, but also potentially to even our survival as a species.

And given the mission of the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife . . . “is to protect and enhance Oregon’s fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations” . . . the proposal I've offered also appears to be very consistent with the agency mission itself.

In summary, the current bill before you, especially in a democracy, does not balance consumptive versus non-consumptive uses, does not reflect the number of participants involved and the economic value of wildlife viewing compared with fishing and hunting, and does not include a scientist, specifically a conservation biologist, to provide their expertise and input as a member to better enhance the Commission's ability to develop science-based policy.]

Therefore, given both the need for balance on any state Commission, and the data-based rationale presented here for determining Commission membership towards achieving that balance, that without the kind of significant changes proposed to ensure balanced Commission representation in a democracy, current bill HB 2747 should not move forward.

Thank you for listening to my input, and taking the next important step in a democracy, responding to what you heard with appropriate action.

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American Association for the Advancement of Science, professional member
Society for Conservation Biology, individual member

****SUPPORTING DATA PROVIDED, SPECIFICALLY, TABLES
SUPPORTING STATEMENTS MADE ABOVE, AND THEIR SOURCES.***

SHOWING NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS , WILDLIFE VIEWING, FISHING, HUNTING FOR USA...

2011–2016 Wildlife-Associated Recreation Comparison of Participants

(Numbers in thousands)

	2011		2016	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total wildlife-related recreationists	90,108	100	103,694	100
Total sportspersons	37,397	42	39,553	38
Anglers	33,112	37	35,754	34
Hunters	13,674	15	11,453	11
Total wildlife-watching participants	71,776	80	86,042	83
Around the home	68,598	76	81,128	78
Away from home	22,496	25	23,720	23

SHOWING PARTICIPANTS, EXPENDITURES, WILDLIFE VIEWING, FISHING, HUNTING FOR USA...

2011–2016 Wildlife-Associated Recreation Comparison of Expenditures

(Numbers in billions of 2016 dollars)

	2011		2016	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total, wildlife-related recreation expenditures ...	154.8	100	156.9	100
Total, fishing and hunting expenditures	96.1	100	81.0	100
Fishing expenditures, total	44.7	100	46.1	100
Trip-related	23.3	52	21.7	47
Equipment, total	16.6	37	21.1	46
Fishing equipment	6.5	15	7.4	16
Auxiliary equipment	1.2	3	3.2	7
Special equipment	8.9	20	10.5	23
Other	4.8	11	3.3	7
Hunting expenditures, total	36.1	100	26.2	100
Trip-related	11.1	31	9.2	35
Equipment, total	15.0	41	12.8	49
Hunting equipment	8.2	23	7.4	28
Auxiliary equipment	1.9	5	2.0	8
Special equipment	4.7	13	3.4	13
Other	10.0	28	4.2	16
Wildlife-watching expenditures, total	58.7	100	75.9	100
Trip-related	18.5	31	11.6	15
Equipment, total	29.1	49	55.1	73
Wildlife-watching equipment	12.1	21	12.1	16
Auxiliary equipment	1.7	3	1.0	1
Special equipment	15.3	26	41.9	55
Other	11.2	19	9.2	12

*Oregon data, next page, 2016 FHWAR did not collect data at the state level so there are no state-level reports, so see trends.

SHOWING PARTICIPANTS, EXPENDITURES, WILDLIFE VIEWING, FISHING, HUNTING RE OREGON DATA

Oregon 2006 and 2011 Comparison

(Numbers in thousands. Expenditures in 2011 dollars)

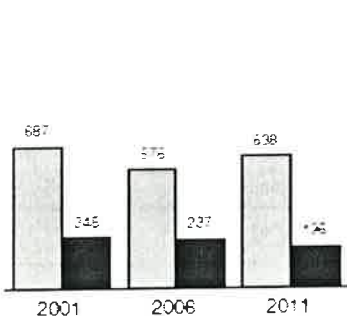
	2006	2011	Percent change
Fishing			
Anglers in state	576	638	NS ¹¹
Days in state	8,384	5,658	NS ⁻³³
In-state expenditures by U.S. anglers	\$554,471	\$640,855	NS ¹⁶
State resident anglers	483	386	NS ⁻²⁰
Total expenditures by state residents	\$566,392	\$430,736	NS ⁻²⁴
Hunting			
Hunters in state	237	196	NS ⁻¹⁷
Days in state	2,729	2,205	NS ⁻¹⁹
In-state expenditures by U.S. hunters	\$416,866	\$238,696	NS ⁻⁴³
State resident hunters	219	181	NS ⁻¹⁷
Total expenditures by state residents	\$375,209	\$226,856	NS ⁻⁴⁰
Away-From-Home Wildlife Watching			
Participants in state	675	537	NS ⁻²⁰
Days in state	8,162	7,268	NS ⁻¹¹
State resident participants	481	401	NS ⁻¹⁷
Around-The-Home Wildlife Watching			
Total participants	1,129	1,206	NS ⁷
Observers	770	803	NS ⁴
Feeders	995	964	NS ⁻³
Wildlife-Watching Expenditures			
In-state expenditures by U.S. wildlife watchers	\$866,299	\$1,697,222	NS ⁹⁶
Total expenditures by state residents	\$767,978	\$1,712,492	NS ¹²³

^{NS} Not different from zero at the 10 percent level of significance

SHOWING TRENDS, PARTICIPANTS, EXPENDITURES, WILDLIFE VIEWING, FISHING, HUNTING, OR DATA

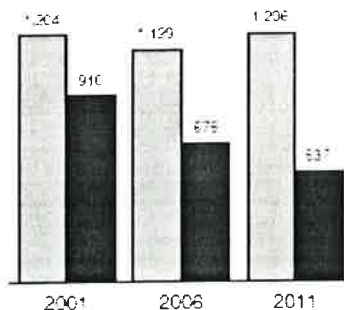
Number of People Who Hunted and Fished in Oregon: 2001-2011
(In thousands)

Anglers
Hunters



Number of People Who Wildlife Watched in Oregon: 2001-2011
(In thousands)

Around the home
Away from home



Total Expenditures by Participants in Oregon
(In millions of 2011 dollars)

Anglers
Hunters
Wildlife Watchers

