



Oregon Association of  
Conservation Districts

February 27, 2019

Senate Committee on Natural Resources  
senr.exhibits@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: Support for SB 445 Oregon Invasive Species Council

To Chair Dembrow, Vice-Chair Olsen, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am testifying on behalf of the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts to express support for SB 445. OACD serves and represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, which implement and assist in voluntary conservation. The Districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by working closely with private landowners as well as non-profit, federal, and state partners. Invasive species threaten Oregon's habitat, water quality and quantity, and natural resources economy. We encourage the committee to **support SB 445 to increase capacity to address invasive species throughout the state** by enhancing representation on the Oregon Invasive Species Council and adding \$400,000 in funding for Council operations and grants.

The Oregon Invasive Species Council (OISC) is the only statewide entity tasked with coordinating efforts to address all invasive species, not just "weeds." Invasive pathogens like Sudden Oak Death and insects like Gypsy Moth are already impacting not only our environment, but also local natural resource industries. OISC was able to help members and partners like SWCDs and state agencies address these problems through coordination and funding from an Emergency Control Account. **OISC is a key nexus in addressing urgent invasive species problems, and preventing future invasive species crises** through early detection and rapid response. SB 445 would provide much-needed funding for the emergency control account and set aside funding for a legislatively-mandated outreach and education grant program.

In addition to the benefits of investing in invasive species control, education, and outreach, SB 445 would enhance OISC's human resources. Establishing voting membership for Parks and Recreation, requiring representation from non-voting membership with representatives from the legislature, Governor's office, and federal agencies strengthens the expertise and coordinating capabilities of the council.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony SB 445 and the importance of protecting our state from the environmental and economic impacts of invasive species. The Oregon Invasive Species Council is critical to educating Oregonians about invasive species control and prevention, and coordinating partners from local SWCDs to federal agencies who solve invasive species problems. **OISC's efforts will only become more important as threats from invasive species are compounded by climate change, wildfires, drought, and extreme weather events. We encourage you to invest in mitigating this threat by supporting SB 445.**

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anna Freitas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anna" and last name "Freitas" clearly distinguishable.

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