

Chair Witt and members of the committee:

For the record, my name is Steve Hagan and I am the Northwest Director At-Large of Oregon Hunters Association. I am associated with the 10 OHA chapters in the region defined by Clatsop County to the north, Emerald Valley Chapter in Springfield to the south, Lincoln County Chapter to the west and Hoodview Chapter in Gresham to the east.

I was a stakeholder in the Western Oregon Landowner and Hunter Elk Management Meetings facilitated by the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife in the spring of 2017 and am currently a stakeholder in a stakeholder-based elk management workgroup focused on reducing the public safety risks associated with the increase in elk population in the greater Clatsop Plains.

Being involved in both workgroups, I appreciate the issues and frustration with the existing damage program as it relates to small pieces of property having damage problems.

I applaud the fact that the bill has a narrow focus to specific counties; that is a positive for the bill.

I am writing in **opposition** to the following specific portions of House Bill 3227:

(3) Establishes hunting unit boundaries around private and public lands where excessive elk damage is occurring;

Unless I am mistaken, the phrase “excessive elk damage” has no definition as it relates to the **public lands** portion of that above phrase. And defining “excessive elk damage” on **public lands** would be required to part of an appropriate public process with the appropriate public lands managers, would it not?

(8) Does not limit the total number of program tags available to a person;

This phrase sets no limitation on the number of tags available at any one time; it opens the door to an entire herd of elk being removed at one time when the hazing that currently occurs with a regulated set of tags available at one may be enough to cause the elk to move away and the damage occurring to end.

(10) Does not impose a fee for a person to register with the program;

While the fee should not be onerous, this particular phrase flies in the face of the existing programs because ODFW oversight of the program is certainly not free. Who is supposed to be covering the cost of this pilot program?

I would encourage the committee to ask that the workgroup process be used in the coming legislative interim to narrow the focus of this bill and find supportable consensus so that landowner damage issues can be addressed without causing unintended problems.