

Dear Chairman Michael Dembrow,

Recently Oregon House Bill 2835 passed the House of Representatives on a 55-4 vote. I am writing in support of this important piece of legislation that is scheduled for a hearing in the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources. This legislation will protect waterway access in the state.

Oregon is a state renowned for its plentiful water supplies and outstanding recreation opportunities on its public waterways. The abundance of outstanding river resources is a reason why people continue to live, work, recreate, and travel to the state. Protecting rivers and access to them is important to conservation and recreation, as it ties to strong local economies and community health.

Public lands and waterways are the backbone of our rapidly growing outdoor industry, and without access to these resources, the industry could not thrive as it does today. Communities across Oregon recognize that outdoor recreation supports health, contributes to a high quality of life and—perhaps most importantly—attracts and sustains employers and families. Investing in outdoor infrastructure and access attracts employers and active workforces, ensuring that those communities thrive economically and socially.

Preservation of access to public waterways in Oregon is a vital part of the outdoor recreation economy, and a love for rivers is a value that is deeply embedded in the history and identity of our state. Rivers offer unique opportunities for residents and visitors alike to boat, hike, fish, enjoy wildlife, and treasure our states incredible natural resources.

American Whitewater has been involved in access legislation in Oregon since the early 2000's, and has been a primary advocate to attest that Oregon's rivers provide a high quality of life for its citizens as well as serve a vital part of the state's tourism industry.

As a member of American Whitewater, and a paddler who enjoys recreating on Oregon's outstanding rivers, I'd like to personally ask for your support on HB 2835, and our continued efforts to improve access to, and quality of recreation opportunities on Oregon's public waterways.

Sincerely,

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