



The Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, Oregon
1233 Veterans Way
PO Box C
Warm Springs, Oregon 97761

February 2, 2021

Hon. Lee Beyer
Oregon State Senate
900 Court St. NE, S-411
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: SB 246 support

Dear Chair Beyer:

The Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon support Senate Bill 246 to protect Oregon from radioactive waste. Our people today, as well as our ancestors, lived on and fished Che'wana, which your ancestors named the Columbia River. We have also lived and fished on the Deschutes, Metolius, John Day, Hood, and Willamette Rivers and Willow Creek since time immemorial, and our people continue to exercise our Treaty Fishing Rights on these rivers. Our people choose to be stewards of all our lands, including rivers on which we exercise Treaty Rights.

We have fought for over a century to protect the great salmon runs of the Pacific Northwest, and we are starting to see recovery of salmon fisheries that many Oregonians had written off as lost. An example of our efforts is the multimillion dollar fish passage project at Round Butte Dam, which we jointly funded with Portland General Electric and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. This project involved construction of a unique "water tower" structure that enables downstream passage of juvenile fish and will return adult Chinook and Sockeye salmon, as well as steelhead, to the Metolius, Crooked, and upper Deschutes Rivers.

We learned last year that the Department of Environmental Quality was unable to stop North Dakota from shipping radioactive waste to Oregon and dumping it near the Columbia River. This is a long haul—almost halfway across the Lower 48—to find a disposal site. This told us that all the Plains States, Great Lakes States, and our Northwest neighbors have stricter standards for radioactive waste disposal than the Beaver State. When we look at the many rivers to cross between here and North Dakota, the many salmon streams the trucks traverse and roll along once they cross the Continental Divide, and the hazardous conditions even on our interstate highways in winter, we are alarmed that the State of Oregon has allowed this to happen.

The Warm Springs Tribal Council is thankful the Senate Committee on Energy and Environment took up SB 246 early in the 2021 Session and we urge its swift passage. We expect it to be enforced consistent with Senate Bill 770, which the Legislative Assembly passed in 2001, the main post in the legislative structure supporting our tribal-state government-to-government relationship. Cooperating with tribes will help protect our vital rivers from contamination. Thank you for considering SB 246.

Sincerely,

Raymond Tsumpti Sr., Chairman
Tribal Council