

On Behalf of Washington County Farm Bureau as the County President I am writing in opposition of HB 2844. Beaver management is critical to maintaining farm infrastructure, preventing flooding, and maintaining roads.

Beavers can cause extensive riparian damage, their dams can block culverts, wash out critical roads, flood farm fields, homes, and parks, and alter water systems. As Farmers we rely on the ability to privately trap beavers to avoid the significant damage that beavers can cause to our operations. We do not trap beavers for sport – We only take them when they are causing damage to my property or impacting our farms.

Beavers are abundant on our landscape, and there is no data that suggests that they need additional protection. Additionally, the bill proposes to remove the classification of beavers as a rodent. Beavers are taxonomically classified as rodents, and should be correctly identified in statute.

As landowners, we need to address a beaver issue that is jeopardizing our property immediately. We cannot afford to be required to get a permit from ODFW (which I know environmental groups would advocate should eventually not be issued). Further, the available non-lethal deterrence doesn't work well in our experience, and relocating beavers can actually transfer disease.

We need to maintain the ability to manage predatory species as needed to protect our farms – the state should not eliminate tools, especially with no sound scientific basis to do so. We urge you to OPPOSE HB 2844.