



Oregon

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**To: The Honorable Jeff Golden, Chair
Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery**



**Senate Bill 761
Brian Wolfer, acting Game Program Manager
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**

The department appreciates the opportunity to discuss Senate Bill 761 with you today. The department has no position on the bill. SB 761 would expand the pilot program for urban deer population control to include elk, allowing cities to petition the department for authorization to control over abundant elk populations within city limits.

In some urban communities of Oregon, elk have taken up residence within city limits. These situations can lead to undesirable conflict including safety issues through collisions with vehicles and sometimes direct aggressive interactions with people and pets. Additionally, these conflicts are associated with a spectrum of issues including: feeding of wildlife; differences in opinion and values regarding resident elk; and, differences of opinion regarding potential solutions to the issue.

As the lead agency responsible for wildlife management, the department actively works with cities and communities experiencing conflicts resulting from resident elk. As written, SB 761 would direct department to include elk into existing rules adopted by department for addressing conflicts with urban deer within city limits. If passed, SB 761 may increase department workload created during the review of petitions, oversight of carcass handling and donation, receipt and disposal of hides and antlers, and assessing elk populations in affected communities.

The department recognizes the provision in the bill requiring cities to adopt ordinances restricting wildlife feeding or disallowing attractants prior to requesting a kill permit from the department. Cities willing to pass these ordinances can have the greatest effect on deterring wildlife from urbanization or residing in cities. The department has not received a petition from a city requesting kill permits for deer through the existing pilot program. However, the program has contributed to some cities restricting wildlife feeding as a means to reduce conflict.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

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