



ASSOCIATION OF NORTHWEST STEELHEADERS

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March 25, 2021

RE: Steelheaders Testimony on House Bill 2386

Dear Chair Witt and House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee members:

My name is Betsy Emery. I am the Advocacy and Campaign Manager for the Association of Northwest Steelheaders. Our organization was founded in 1960 and is one of the oldest recreational fishing and conservation non-profit organizations in the Pacific Northwest. We have eight chapters in Oregon and one in Southwest Washington, representing over 800 members and nearly 5,000 supporters dedicated to enhancing and protecting fisheries and fish habitats for today and tomorrow, with a vision of abundant, sustainable fisheries and healthy watersheds.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on House bill 2386, which would establish an independent science review board administered out of the Institute for Natural Resources at Oregon State University as well as an independent scientific review fund to support this work.

Oregon's government often faces difficult decisions in managing and regulating natural resources and environmental needs, decisions that have far reaching impacts for the humans and animals that call Oregon home. Decision makers are often presented with incomplete, biased, cherry-picked, or industry funded science and background information, muddying the decision making context and contributing to conflict about the resulting decision.

Impartial, peer-reviewed science is the foundation for science-based decision making and policy formation, and for far too long, the State has lacked a consistent review process to ensure the science involved in decision making is unbiased and defensible.

The need for independent review is especially important in salmon and steelhead recovery planning and fisheries regulations in both freshwater and marine environments given the complexities, vested interests, and multi-agency jurisdiction involved in these decisions. An independent science review board will improve the credibility and transparency of these

decisions as well as foster a better understanding and a foundation of quality science to address the many natural resource and fisheries challenges we face.

We recommend that the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee support this bill.

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to testify.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Emery". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "E" at the end.

Betsy Emery
Advocacy and Campaign Manager
Association of Northwest Steelheaders
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