



**Testimony by Travis Williams, Willamette Riverkeeper and Executive Director  
in support of HB 2386, a bill to protect independent science**

March 25, 2021

Chair Witt, Vice Chairs Breese-Iverson and Hudson and Members of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee:

For the record, my name is Travis Williams, Riverkeeper and Executive Director of the non-profit organization Willamette Riverkeeper. Since 1996, we have proudly served as the eyes, ears, and voice of the Willamette River. Together with thousands of Oregonians' support, our conservation and cleanup programs enable us to generate positive change for the Willamette River Basin. We support diversity and inclusion in our work to bring all Oregonians to the Willamette River to recreate, enjoy and protect our river.

We believe in a river with excellent water quality and abundant habitat, and safe for fishing and recreation. We believe this is a fundamental public right. Today I am here to support a bill that will bring independent science from credible scientists into Oregon's public policy debate.

With the looming challenges of climate change and the continued calls for racial and environmental justice, we need sound science that will promote understanding among citizens and provide the scientifically verified facts to the legislators and other opinion leaders who debate public policy and seek to make better informed decisions that shape our laws and lives.

All too often interest groups try to control the outcome of public policies by bringing opinion in the guise of scientific fact into public policy debates. Having good science, well documented and peer-reviewed, will identify and inform the public policy process, to the longterm benefit of all Oregonians. HB 2386 establishes processes and institutions to accomplish this.

Good science will create better, informed decisions, which will produce virtuous and verified facts for legislators and other leaders making wise policy choices for the rest of us. Let's get the science right, then we can address Oregon's problems as better informed policy makers.

We thank Representative Holvey for bringing this bill before the committee today.

Chair Witt, Co-Chairs Breeze-Iverson and Member of the House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee, I urge you to forward HB 2386 to the House of Representatives with a DO PASS recommendation.

Thank you.

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