



TO: House Committee on Economic Recovery and Prosperity

FROM: Oregon Recreation & Park Association

DATE: February 9, 2021

RE: Support for HB 2125

Please consider this letter as support for HB 2125. Coincidentally, the week one of our members will be speaking to the Senate Health Care Committee regarding the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the parks and recreation sector. We are incredibly pleased by the legislature's notice of how our employees, our communities and the individuals who utilize recreation facilities have suffered but also how they have adapted and endured.

The Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA) is made up of more than 2,200 members, including 68 park and recreation agencies as well as professionals and volunteers. Our mission is to support the recreation and park profession in Oregon through leadership, education, advocacy, and member services.

As noted in HB 2125, the pandemic (as well as wildfire) devastated use of and funding for outdoor recreation and tourism in Oregon and revealed deficiencies in current financing. And while the past year is one that none of us want to repeat, one positive result would be this study of lost revenue and potential funding and operational efficiencies. While state centered, the results of the study will prove useful to local parks and recreation providers as well and will guide innovation and increased collaboration among outdoor recreation and tourism providers.

And, certainly, HB 2125's dedication of lottery funds to the Oregon Parks for the Future Fund is good for all Oregonians. ORPA has spent years discussing prospective new funding sources with an appropriate nexus that makes sense for outdoor enthusiasts. It is hard. But for State parks improvements, the connection between lottery funds, economic development, tourism and recreation is undeniable.

We join you in support of Oregon State Parks and HB 2125.