



Oregon

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**To: The Honorable Janelle Bynum, Chair
House Committee on Judiciary**



**Senate Bill 289A
Shannon Hurn, Deputy Director
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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate bill 289A. ODFW's mission is to protect and enhance Oregon's fish and wildlife and their habitats for use and enjoyment by present and future generations.

The department strives to provide quality opportunities for all Oregonians and visitors interested in hunting, trapping, angling and shellfish harvest to be able to learn about and participate in those activities. Additionally, Oregon's abundant wildlife is there for all to enjoy, and we encourage the viewing of wildlife and the excitement that comes with having the opportunity to view them in their natural habitat.

Recent events have illustrated the real concerns people have about their safety in the outdoors, and how greater emphasis is needed on providing people with equitable access to enjoy outdoor recreation free of harassment, physical violence and conflict.

SB 289A would add bias crimes to the list of criminal acts in ORS 497.415, where an individual can have their hunting, angling and/or shellfish license revoked by the court as part of their probation terms following a successful prosecution. ORS 497.415 already provides this penalty for violation of wildlife laws, as well as Criminal trespass, Criminal mischief, and discharging a weapon in protected areas (ex. near airports) while hunting.

Currently, citations are passed on to the court and flagged so that courts know that in addition to penalties as a violation or misdemeanor charge this additional corrective requirement can be imposed. Once courts rule on the outcome any revocation as part of the probation terms is reported to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Typically, this information includes the individual's hunter/angler ID, the type of license revocation that is imposed and for what duration of time. The department then uses that information to designate the individual in the Electronic Licensing System as unable to hold a license(s). Upon completion of the duration of the revocation period, and confirmation by the courts other fines and penalties are resolved, the individual may request removal of the revocation from the system.

Additionally, Oregon is one of forty-eight states that participates in the Wildlife Violators Compact. This Compact allows for the revocation of a license(s) to occur across all of the participating states. This prevents individuals from applying outside the state where they have been convicted of a wildlife crime to continue to harvest wildlife.

The loss of an individual's access to hold a license to harvest wildlife has shown to be a deterrent in preventing future criminal acts against wildlife and violation of wildlife laws. The intention behind SB 289A is to deter people from acts of hate perpetrated against their fellow outdoor enthusiasts. The hope is SB 289A acts as a further deterrent, affording everyone the right to experience Oregon's natural environment, without fear of harassment or violence.

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