



Volunteer

Testimony Before Oregon House Committee
On
Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water

January 26, 2023

Subject: HB 2532 – Appropriates moneys to State Department of Fish and Wildlife, out of General Fund, for purposes related to chronic wasting disease (CWD)

Chair Helm and members of the Committee

My name is David Wiley. I live in Sublimity, Oregon. I am a member of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) and a Lead Volunteer for the Elk Foundation in Oregon. Today I am speaking to you on behalf of the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation.

The RMEF is a national non-profit hunter sponsored conservation organization whose mission is to ensure the future of elk, other wildlife, their habitat, and our hunting heritage. We represent more than 225,000 members nationwide and more than 14,000 in Oregon. Since 1991 within Oregon, RMEF and its partners have completed more than 1,034 conservation and hunting heritage projects in the state, enhancing over 865,647 acres and improved recreational access to 139,655 acres.

RMEF strongly recommends HB 2532 for this Committee’s full and unqualified support, approval, and passage to the full House with a do-pass recommendation.

CWD has been found only 40 miles into Idaho from the Oregon’s eastern border.

You have heard from the Dr Gillen, the State Wildlife Veterinarian, and a highly regarded expert on CWD. He has stated the science and the consequent precarious situation facing Oregon’s deer, elk, and moose populations. CWD is always fatal.

We consider CWD a significant threat to deer and elk. House Bill 2532 would provide a significant increase in the state’s commitment to fighting this disease, and positions Oregon well to compete for federal funding as well.

RMEF is a founding member of the CWD Alliance who’s objective is public education regarding CWD threat. We recently allocated \$100,000 in grant funding to assist with research to improve scientific understanding of CWD and to enhance ways to fight it. This past December we worked (successfully) to pass the CWD Research and Management Act as part of the Omnibus Appropriation Bill, authorizing significant resources for state grants to counter this disease.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. Are there any questions?