

**February 2, 2023**

**Oregon House of Representatives**

**900 Court St NE**

**Salem, OR 97301**

**RE: House Joint Resolution 5 - Right to Fish, Hunt, Harvest and Gather**

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Kropf, Members of the House Committee on Rules:

On behalf of our 1,000 members and 6,000 supporters who reside in this state, the Oregon Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers (BHA) requests the House Committee on Rules passes House Joint Resolution 5 (HJR 5), which would enable the citizens of Oregon to consider formalizing a constitutional right to fish, hunt, harvest, and gather in our beautiful state.

Oregonians have long demonstrated a deep love for the nexus between food and nature. Hunting, fishing, gathering, and foraging are foundational to the cultural identity of Oregon - an identity central to both the culture of the original indigenous inhabitants of our state as well as its subsequent residents. Formalizing and protecting this right for present and future generations is critical to the continued tradition of managing healthy landscapes and wildlife populations so that every Oregonian, and every Oregonian to come, has the same opportunities to experience the deep appreciation of harvesting their own food among our wild lands and places.

In addition to the national and economic pressures affecting food security, here in Oregon, we have seen initiatives seeking to prohibit Oregonians' ability to provide for their family by harvesting food from our shared lands and waters - attempts that would strip Oregonians of their self-sufficiency and serve to sever the citizenry from public wildlife and natural resources.



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Such prohibitions on the ability for Oregonians to provide free ranging and wild foods for their families would cause far-reaching damage to conservation in Oregon by severing the food-based ties many conservationists share with the land. Such prohibitions also directly undercut the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation, which has done so much to bring keystone species back from the brink and has allowed generations of hunters and anglers to grow closer to our heritage and nature.

At Oregon BHA, we believe we have an obligation and a duty to protect our fish, our wildlife, and their habitats. HJR 5 is a critical step towards enshrining the continued existence far into the future of the healthy wild lands, waters, and wildlife that sustain hundreds of thousands of Oregonians every single year.

In this state we share extreme pride in the idea that our public lands support healthy populations of fish and wildlife, and HJR 5 provides Oregon residents constitutional protection to *their right* to feed their families through fishing, hunting, harvesting, and gathering of wild and foraged foods.

Thank you for your time.

Ian Isaacson | Co-Chair, Oregon Chapter of Backcountry Hunters & Anglers



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