



To
Senate Committee on Natural Resources
900 Court St NE
Salem, Oregon

02.19.2023

Sub: Testimony in support of SB 886 (sensitive wildlife data bill)

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod and Members of the Committee

The Oregon Wildlife Coalition submits this testimony in support of SB 886. The coalition is made of the following wildlife conservation groups: Center for Biological Diversity, Portland Audubon, Oregon Wild, Cascadia Wildlands, Humane Society of the United States, Humane Voters Oregon, Defenders of Wildlife and Western Environmental Law Center.

SB 886 is a small administrative fix to an otherwise successfully running program at Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW). When the legislature passed HB 2841 with bipartisan support in 2019, it agreed that protecting sensitive wildlife location was ODFW's responsibility since their location monitoring efforts put certain individuals at higher risk. The bill protected sensitive wildlife location data such as location of nesting sites, denning sites and radio collar frequencies by creating an exemption in the public records request process in sharing such data. This was done to primarily protect vulnerable individuals of wildlife species that are monitored or whose location are known by ODFW from being exploited or misused.

The bill did allow sharing such sensitive data with government and educational institutions and certain individuals through signing a non-disclosure agreement. However, in doing so, the bill

unintentionally created a challenge for ODFW to share such information with federal agencies, educational institutions tribal governments. The purpose was not to have a non-disclosure agreement with such agencies but the bill language requires it right now. SB 886 is an administrative fix to address this specific challenge.

Additionally, the 2019 bill passed with a Jan 2024 sunset. SB 886 is extending the sunset to 2029 and ODFW will use this time to continue to monitor the efficacy of the program and whether it is meeting the desired needs for which it was created.

While both are minor administrative fixes, SB 886 is critical to the continuation of the provision for ODFW to protect sensitive wildlife location data. Hence, SB 886 serves a very important purpose in protecting the vulnerable individuals in our wildlife population, and we urge you to support the bill.

Thanking you

Cascadia Wildlands

Oregon Wild

Center for Biological Diversity

Western Environmental Law Center

Humane Society of the United States

Humane Voters Oregon

Defenders of Wildlife

Portland Audubon