



TO: Joint Committee on Ways and Means
FROM: Oregon Recreation & Park Association
DATE: February 23, 2023
RE: HB 3016 - Establishes Community Green Infrastructure Grant Program

On behalf of over 2,200 park and recreation professionals, agencies, and volunteers represented by the Oregon Recreation and Park Association (ORPA), I am writing to encourage the Committee's support and passage of House Bill 3016 to establish the Community Green Infrastructure Grant Program. We are grateful to the bill requestors for suggesting amendments that add a park representative to the advisory committee and add Oregon Parks and Recreation Department as a partnering agency.

Parks and recreation services are at the heart of protecting public land for the health and wellbeing of Oregonians everywhere. Our land managers are the first to experience the impacts of climate change, and at the forefront of developing mitigation strategies to protect our natural areas. Our community engagement and park planners employ an environmental justice lens to our operations to ensure green spaces are accessible to all people. And our natural resources scientists are on the ground using the latest technology and best practices in ecological preservation.

The passage of this bill with amendments would mean significant support for park and recreation agencies. First, the grant program will align community development with the core values we hold as public land managers. Building public and private partnerships is a paramount activity for our industry. Second, an important component of this bill addresses the rising concerns we have related to the emergence of the emerald ash borer. Our natural resources professionals are actively collaborating to mitigate this invasive species. And finally, a grant program would mean financial support for the work we already value and for which we need continued support.

We strongly encourage the passage of HB 3016 with amendments to ensure funding for projects that provide social, environmental or economic benefits to our communities.

Thank you for your consideration, and please feel free to contact me or Cindy Robert, ORPA's lobbyist, if we may offer any additional information to the Committee.

Sincerely,

Amanda Parsons

Amanda Parsons
Executive Director
Oregon Recreation and Park Association

c: Cindy Robert, ORPA Lobbyist (503.260.3431)