



March 22, 2023

Chair Marsh, Vice Chairs Levy and Levy, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 3464. I am Timothy Sexauer, landowner in the Applegate Valley of southwest Oregon and owner of Keystone Elements LLC. Keystone Elements is a federal contractor providing water support for wildland fire suppression and prescribed burns, as well as private consultation and contractor services for landowners experiencing conflicts with beaver.

I believe that this bill provides a more sensible legal classification for beaver, while promoting the use of non-lethal conflict mitigation methods and still allowing lethal management on a case by case basis. We can protect our infrastructure and agriculture while promoting the much needed restoration of the beaver population in the beaver state.

The crucial keystone role and benefits of beaver on the landscape are well documented and increasingly well known: wildlife and fish habitat, water security, wildfire breaks, flood and drought mitigation, evapotranspiration needed for a healthy water cycle, aquifer recharge, water filtration, etc. These are all issues that are top priority for all Oregonians, and they cannot be adequately addressed without a restoration of the population of this keystone species throughout our watersheds.

While beaver's expert engineering designs often conflict with human landscape and infrastructure designs, in almost every case this conflict can be resolved non-lethally, largely with simple mitigation technologies that were not available to previous generations of farmers and landowners.

While I empathize with the minority of comments, largely from farmers, advocating for the right to continue managing beaver on their lands without oversight, I respectfully disagree and offer an alternative perspective.

I would argue that a landowner killing beaver is akin to building in-stream infrastructure, pumping water from rivers and streams, and dumping substances into waterways. These activities, while not banned outright, are all regulated for the reason that they impact much more than the individual property in question. The process of beaver on the landscape is essential to the common interest, livelihood, and security of all Oregonians.

Another consideration is that when a landowner chooses to remove beaver from their landscape, it is only a temporary way to address the problem, since other beaver will usually soon be attracted to the same habitat that attracted the previous beaver. This process creates a "black hole" on the landscape for the beaver population, negatively affecting the

well being of humans and non-humans upstream, downstream, and throughout the surrounding region.

I encourage you to vote yes on HB 3464. Thank you for your time and service.

-Timothy Sexauer
landowner and owner of Keystone Elements LLC