



# Oregon

Tina Kotek, Governor

## Parks and Recreation Department

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Chair Manning, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 2737A. For the record, I am Chris Havel, with Oregon Parks and Recreation Department (OPRD). OPRD has no position on HB 2737A, though it was written in direct response to a need raised by the agency.

This bill would allow state agencies to transfer donate, exchange or lease property to one of the nine federally-recognized Indian Tribes in Oregon. Under the bill, agencies would still be required to follow existing Department of Administrative Services approval processes for sale, transfer or exchange of property that apply to their agency.

In evaluating the best management of a sites, it owns, OPRD occasionally identifies park properties that could be transferred to a different land manager to more effectively or efficiently meet historic, cultural or recreation needs in an area.

Recently, OPRD transferred Cascadia State Park ownership to Linn County. In this case, OPRD staff were travelling over 75 miles from Detroit Lake State Park to operate Cascadia, while Linn County Parks had staff travelling just up the road to manage nearby county parks. The County had capacity, interest and experience to meet recreational needs and be good stewards of the property. Over a multi-year process, we worked with Linn county, tribal leaders, community members and many others to ensure a smooth transfer that will ultimately enhance recreation opportunities in the mid-Willamette Valley.

As the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Commission evaluates its property acquisition and decommissioning strategies, we rely on the ability to transfer properties to other land managers when it is in the public interest whether they be local, state, federal or a tribal government. After learning that tribal governments were the only exclusion in this list and consulting with the Governor's Office in the past administration, we spoke with the Legislative Commission on Indian Services and Representative Sanchez to open the door on legislative options. The drafting process included feedback from the Department of Administrative Services.

In 2015, ORS 275.070 was amended to allow Oregon counties to sell or donate land to an eligible Indian tribe. HB 2737A is intended to enable state agencies to have a similar authority.

I am happy to answer any questions regarding the background on this bill or how our agency considers property decisions.