

REPRESENTATIVE ANNESSA HARTMAN (SHE/HER)
HOUSE DISTRICT 40



OREGON HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Chair Lieber, Vice-Chair Knopp, members of the committee,

Thank you for your efforts to pass good governance bills—I certainly appreciate efforts to streamline compliance with changing legislative realities, as is the intent with Senate Bill 1095. In today's Public Hearing, you and Senator Steiner expressed the sentiment that the -1 amendment and its conversations surrounding restructuring the OFWC should exist separately from this bill. I wholeheartedly agree, which is why I support excluding OFWC from this bill and allowing our work on HB 3086 to continue.

I do not support pushing these conversations to the interim or a future legislative session because we have already had them before and during this session and have a clear pathway to restructuring the OFWC through HB 3086. Exempting the OFWC from SB 1095 will support tribal voices and allow our work and that of the tribes we are working with to continue.

For far too long, political and environmental leaders have ignored the voices of this land's original stewards, favoring the opinions of Urban Areas over those of Indigenous leaders. I'm writing today because I need folks on this committee and in the environmental community to understand and respect our ways.

That's why I'm disappointed to see SB 1095 moving forward, as it undercuts Indigenous efforts through HB 3086 to restructure the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (OFWC) by aligning it with the more regionally diverse model of the five river basin management areas.

If we allow congressional districts to determine the Commission's makeup, **one Commissioner would represent a total of 13 river basins**. In contrast, another would represent **slightly over two river basins**, and the rest would represent fragments of two to three basins—a far cry from the effective and equitable representation our rivers and wildlife deserve.

Clustering the OFWC representation in Northwest Oregon exacerbates the current muting of Tribal voices because Tribal ecological knowledge of fish, wildlife, lands, and waters is place-based, meaning it recognizes the unique cultural, social, and environmental context of each water basin. Structuring basin management through congressional districts significantly fragments river basin representation, making it incredibly difficult to have Indigenous knowledge meaningfully impactful.

Instead, we need to listen to Indigenous voices and structure the Commission based on regions more aligned with wildlife and habitat management. We must organize the representation structure to more equitably give Tribes a voice and encourage sharing Tribal ecological knowledge with the OFWC in setting fish, wildlife, and habitat policy.

Doing so will elevate ecological concerns over political considerations in the selection of Commission representatives and the development of State fish and wildlife policy, as the health of Oregon's fish and wildlife populations and habitats are rooted in natural and ecological features such as watersheds and river basins, not on political considerations or voting power.

As a Native woman, I need to make it very clear that, much like the legislators in this building, it is incredibly difficult to get us Natives to agree. We are all not the same. And to hear from 7 of the 9 Federally recognized tribes in support of the same thing should raise huge positive flags.

The river basin approach has also received bipartisan support from several legislators and stakeholder sectors, including the Coastal Caucus, the Sportsmen's Caucus, the Sportsmen's conservation community, the natural resources community, and the livestock producers community. This broad swath of stakeholders agrees that the only path forward for SB 1095 includes the -1 amendment that honors the support of HB 3086.

Ultimately, the need to expand OFWC's regional representation is a matter of environmental and indigenous justice. We must include and truly listen to the voices of our land's original stewards and those most impacted by changes to river basin policies.

I sincerely hope you recognize the value of our voices, and encourage you to exclude OFWC from SB 1095.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Annessa Hartman', written in a cursive style.

Representative Annessa Hartman
House District 40 – Gladstone, Oregon City, North Clackamas County