



To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources

From: Julia DeGraw, Oregon Conservation Network, and Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Date: 5/23/2023

RE: OPPOSITION of HB 3086-7, Fish and Wildlife Commission Reform

Dear Chair Fahey, Vice Chairs Kropf and Breese-Iverson, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer input on HB 3086 with the -7 or -8 amendments. On behalf of our thousands of members and supporters in Oregon, we would like to register the Oregon League of Conservation Voters, and the Oregon Conservation Network's strong opposition to passing HB 3086, the Fish and Wildlife Commission Reform Bill. HB 3086 with the -7 or -8 amendments is still one of OCN's 2023 Major Threats to a Healthy Oregon.

The Oregon Conservation Network (OCN) is coordinated through the Oregon League of Conservation Voters (OLCV). OCN is a coalition of 42 not-for-profit organizations throughout the state, united to advocate for pro-conservation legislation and to fight policies that threaten our state's natural legacy. OCN is powered by tens of thousands of Oregonians who belong to their membership organizations. We work to promote policies that will ensure a better Oregon for our children – and to fight policies that do not.

The OLCV and OCN urge you to not support HB 3086 with the -7 or -8 amendments and to take the time to allow a process that engages all the stakeholder, Tribes, and communities in the reformation of the Fish and Wildlife Commission. There is no need to reform the commission this session and we urge a better process for reforming the commission if the legislature believes significant changes are needed.

OCN member organization including Oregon Wild, Center for Biological Diversity, Trout Unlimited, Native Fish Society, OLCV, and many others have been working in good faith to come up with a compromise version of this bill that maintains a land-based approach but that attempts to acknowledge and favor a population based approach with how the at large positions are structured. We were not aware that the -7 amendments were up for a hearing today until yesterday morning and we found out about the new amendment before it was published from a Farm Bureau action alert in favor of the bill. It turns out that three groups in support of the bill, who have anti-conservationist leanings, had enough lead time to send out action alerts mentioning an amendment that had not been published and that we, the opponents of the bill, didn't know were coming out this week. This is not a good process.

The -7 and -8 amendments not only give no weight to population representation, it doesn't even include language for a transition from the current commission form to the new form. This would essentially "blow up" the commission, making it very hard for them to operate in the coming year as they are tasked with very important work. The Commission could fail to act on Federally required actions if the governor and senate are still scrambling to find and fully appoint new commissioners in the new format. We feel strongly that ANY reform bill must have transition language that enables the commission to seamlessly operate and do its business as the transition takes place.

We are deeply committed to forming a diverse and inclusive Fish and Wildlife Commission and for the Tribes to be consulted in Oregon's natural resources decision-making processes in a way that is appropriate for a state to sovereign nation relationship. We want to see a conservation oriented commission filled with individuals who are passionate about Oregon's wildlife and fish and understand the importance of those who have inhabited this land since time immemorial. While the -8 amendments attempt to address some of what we wish to see in the bill, it still fails to address our core concern which is at least some nod to population representation on the Commission.

We are ready and willing to continue negotiating on this bill but our strong preference is for the legislature to allow for a process between now and next session to draft a reform bill to the Fish and Wildlife Commission from scratch so all parties can weigh in and we can come up with a solution that better serves the fish and wildlife as well as the people of our state.

For all these reasons, we strongly urge you to not move HB 3086 with the -7 or -8 amendments and to please continue the negotiations on the bill, or to set up a process to get this right between now and next session.

Sincerely,



Julia B. DeGraw

Coalition Director

Oregon Conservation Network, and Oregon League of Conservation Voters

Testimony Submitted On behalf of all the OCN Member Organizations:

1000 Friends of Oregon, Association of Oregon Recyclers, Audubon Society of Portland, Beyond Toxics, Cascadia Wildlands, Center for Biological Diversity, Center for Food Safety, Central Oregon LandWatch, Climate Solutions, Defenders of Wildlife, Deschutes River Alliance, Engineers for a



Sustainable Future, The Environmental Center, Environment Oregon, Food & Water Watch, Friends of Mount Hood, Friends of the Columbia Gorge, Friends of Family Farmers, Greater Hells Canyon Council, League of Women Voters of Oregon, Native Fish Society, Neighbors for Clean Air, Oceana, Oregon Coast Alliance, Oregon Environmental Council, Oregon Land and Water Alliance, Oregon League of Conservation Voters, Oregon Natural Desert Association, Oregon Physicians for Social Responsibility, Oregon Shores Conservation Coalition, Oregon Wild, Pew Charitable Trusts, Renewable Northwest, Rogue Riverkeeper, Sierra Club Oregon Chapter, The Street Trust, Surfrider Foundation, Trout Unlimited, Tualatin Riverkeepers, WaterWatch of Oregon, The Wetlands Conservancy, Wild Salmon Center, Zero Coalition