



February 5, 2024

House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

*RE: Support for HB 4014*

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

On behalf of the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and our Oregon supporters, I write to express our strong support for HB 4014, the Landowners Living with Beavers bill, which provides funding under a grant program to encourage coexistence with beaver.

Few wildlife species have such a profound influence on the landscape through the processes they set in motion that create and support entire biotic communities. When protections are afforded to beaver, they in turn directly increase and enhance wetlands and biological diversity. With proper management emphasizing the use of non-lethal conflict mitigation techniques and stewardship on the part of landowners, beaver can thrive, creating an environment supporting many rare and sensitive plants and animals, restoring riparian corridors, and building resilient ecological systems which help to mitigate against the effects of land-use changes, increased impervious surfaces, and the effects of climate change.

With the new classification of beavers as furbearers on private lands, landowners now have a greater opportunity to implement and benefit from the use of non-lethal mitigation techniques to address conflicts with the keystone species when they arise. However, currently, the potential or unknown financial cost of a non-lethal approach and/or the lack of technical expertise is often an impediment to landowners seeking to use non-lethal conflict prevention and solution approaches. HB 4014 will close this gap, giving the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife the funds needed to help landowners better coexist with beaver.

Importantly, this bill will encourage a shift away from perceptions of beaver as “pests” towards a widening understanding that beaver are allies to landowners and farmers regarding the ecosystem services they can provide. This shift will be helpful in building more tolerance for their presence as well as a willingness to utilize more sustainable and effective conflict resolution methods. It is for this reason, as well as those listed above, that we strongly support this legislation.

Sincerely,

Kelly Peterson  
Oregon Senior State Director  
The Humane Society of the United States