



OREGONIANS FOR FOOD & SHELTER

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A non-profit coalition to promote the efficient production of quality food and fiber while protecting human health, personal property and the environment, through the integrated, responsible use of pest management products, soil nutrients and biotechnology.

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February 6th 2024

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Oregon State Legislature
Support for HB 4148 – Wildlife Package

Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 4148. Oregonians for Food & Shelter (OFS) is a diverse coalition with members across Oregon's natural resource sector, including many of Oregon's agricultural commodity groups and the forest products industry. Our membership includes companies responsible for protecting natural and urban spaces from invasive and noxious weeds. Our members come together around the importance of pesticides, fertilizers, and biotechnology in managing pests to produce and protect natural resources, and we advocate for science-based policies impacting these tools.

House Bill 4148 contains several policy proposals, and we would like to highlight Section 3 related to the Oregon Invasive Species Council. OFS members are fully aligned with the mission of the Oregon Invasive Species Council, which is to protect Oregon's natural resources and economy by leading a coordinated effort to prevent the introduction of invasive species and to eradicate, contain, or manage existing invasive species in Oregon. With increased threats of invasive species in Oregon and the Pacific Northwest, HB 4148 will provide a timely and necessary review of council programs and activities and provide needed investments for operational capacity and for the council to expand critical emergency response, outreach, and education.

Like many issues impacting Oregon's natural resource sector, effective protection against invasive species requires close collaborations across agencies, partnerships with the private sector, and a strong communication network. Without critical investment in the Oregon Invasive Species Council, the state risks invasive species being unchecked and unmanaged, resulting in widespread displacement of native flora and fauna that can transform entire ecosystems, with severe economic impacts to the natural resources sector, water infrastructure, and public health.

The OISC has been functioning on a shoestring for far too long, needing more dedicated staff and funding to develop outreach and education tools and ensure collaboration across state agencies and partner organizations. We appreciate Representative Helm and the Committee for bringing this bill forward and hope to see funding secured.

Sincerely,

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