

TO: House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment
FROM: Debi Ferrer, The Dalles, Oregon
DATE: February 7, 2024
RE: HB 4014 Coexisting with Beavers

Chair Marsh and Committee Members,

I write today in strong support of HB 4014. As a biology teacher of 32 years and an avid naturalist for my entire life, I am well aware of the benefits beavers bring to their environment. They are considered to be a keystone species: many other species thrive when beavers are present.

I'm also very fortunate to be a landowner with beavers on my property in The Dalles, Oregon. I have watched in awe as they worked over the past several years to build a dam on Mill Creek. The changes their efforts have brought to the ecosystem have been quick and dramatic: more birds, more fish, more water in the summer and slower water during the winter and spring floods. These are clear benefits, a direct result of the presence of beavers.

I realize that not every landowner appreciates beavers as much as I do, which is why I'm so strongly in favor of this bill. If the State of Oregon can provide grants to help property owners learn to co-exist with beavers, more people will become aware of the benefits of having beavers for neighbors.

Humans have never been very good at co-existing with wildlife and it has been to our great detriment. This bill is a step in the right direction to change that pattern. Please work to pass HB 4014 to protect beavers which help protect Oregon's aquatic habitats.

Sincerely,

Debi Ferrer