

Submitter: becky stephenson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2978

Dear Co-Chair Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair McDonald, and Members of the Committee:

Please build on the important progress at the state legislature in recent years by passing HB 2978.

I live in Bend, Oregon where one of the busiest Highways in Oregon runs through our city and continues north and south. Having been here for over 40 years I know of the ever increasing accidents caused by cars hitting wildlife. Friends that live in Sunriver, and teachers I know that commute to LaPine are always talking about how dangerous that drive can be when a deer suddenly comes darting out from the side of the road. I myself have had several close calls that have left me and my fellow hwy 97 drivers wishing we had more wildlife crossings, and not just on Hwy. 97, to make it safer for people and wildlife. That's why I'm fully supportive of this bill.

Wildlife crossings are a highly effective tool that Oregon needs in more places. HB 2978 and an option for permanent state-level funding to support wildlife crossing initiatives will:

- \* Improve the safety of Oregon's roadways
- \* Make Oregon more competitive in capturing federal funding
- \* Remove barriers that prevent animals from finding food, shelter, and mates

I strongly support HB 2978 and I hope you will seize this opportunity to prioritize public safety and restore wildlife habitat connectivity.

Sincerely,  
Becky Stephenson