

Submitter: Scott R Bowler  
On Behalf Of: wildlife water and air  
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3362

Members of the committee:

I am a life-long (literally working on environmental and political issues since age 5, in 1958) sportsman, supporter of wildlife, and defender of the environment. My career was as a science educator teaching young children through university. Today, although retired, I still do work enhancing and restoring habitat, maintaining trails, monitoring streams, writing natural history articles and trail guides, and leading hikes and outdoor recreation. In addition, I regularly fish, forage, paddle, raft and swim in and along our Oregon waterways.

It's abundantly clear to me that, in far too many ways, we are continuing to degrade habitats, imperil and kill wildlife, and dismantle functioning natural ecosystem processes. This not only harms nature, but imperils human society through loss of the ecosystem services healthy habitats provide: clean air, fresh and abundant water, and resources to watch, capture, consume and enjoy.

This bill will help remediate and prevent some of the abuses and degradations we are experiencing. We CAN protect fish, we CAN protect wildlife, we CAN safeguard clean water and air, and we CAN help to mitigate climate change. Paying a modest amount more for a set of tires is absolutely worth it. Some will complain that it will reduce tire sales. I sincerely doubt that: our tax on bicycles, for example, hasn't reduced bike sales and has provided substantial infrastructure and safety benefits. Taxes on gasoline support road building and repair, and haven't reduced gasoline sales.

We need to protect our state's wildlife and fish populations from injury by vehicle collision and water pollution, certainly for human uses (safety, hunting, fishing and watching for enjoyment) but primarily because it is our responsibility to protect and safeguard living things for their own sake. I am pleased to support this visionary bill, and will gladly pay the tiny cost of a few tax dollars, especially amortized over the 5 to 6 years it takes to run through a set of tires. I will appreciate having cleaner, safer waters, and I will appreciate a more intact and functional ecosystem—as will its inhabitants!