



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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March 17, 2025

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Re: HB 3657 Support

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald, Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) is Oregon's largest state-centric hunter conservation organization, representing over 12,000 sportsmen and women throughout the state. Our mission is to protect Oregon's wildlife, habitat, and hunting heritage and we strongly support science-based wildlife and habitat management.

OHA supports HB 3657 and the reasonable approach it takes to landowner compensation for wildlife damage.

OHA was involved in the 2023 workgroup that led to HB 4061 in the 2024 legislative session and now HB 3657 in the 2025 session. During this process OHA, and other sportsmen's organizations, offered our input regarding establishing landowner eligibility requirements. We appreciate that many of those suggestions were incorporated into both the 2024 and 2025 bills.

Of specific concern, mitigating the potential for 'double dipping' by landowners who receive some form of benefit from wildlife on their property. As such, landowners who receive compensation for hunting access or are enrolled in a conservation reserve program are not eligible for compensation through the wildlife damage pilot program.

OHA does have a concern regarding the appropriation amount in the bill as it relates to the expanded scope and scale of the program in the 2025 bill. Expanding the scope from elk depredation to depredation from all wildlife and increasing the scale from 2 pilot program areas to "up to 10 pilot program areas" increase the potential for a larger number of damage complaints. The \$600,000 appropriation may not be large enough to accommodate the increased need. We are appreciative of Representative Levy's comments regarding a forthcoming -2 amendment that will address these concerns.

Landowner compensation is a key part of the complex issues surrounding wildlife damage on private lands. However, we encourage the legislature, stakeholders, state agencies, federal land management agencies to continue to work toward fully addressing the issues of wildlife damage through a more robust, facilitated process.

Thank you for your time,
Amy Patrick
Policy Director