



**Chair Lively, Vice-chairs Gamba and Levy, and Committee Members,**

On behalf of Soul River Inc., I am writing to express our strong support for HB 3932, which proposes to close beaver hunting and trapping on public lands in waterways that are classified as impaired by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). As an organization dedicated to environmental conservation and the empowerment of underserved communities in the outdoors, we believe this bill offers a significant opportunity to address both water quality and habitat preservation in Oregon.

Oregon is home to over 310,000 miles of rivers and streams, with a staggering 106,390 miles—more than one-third of the state's water systems—being classified as impaired. This situation is alarming, and the need for effective, cost-efficient solutions is dire. Beavers are natural ecosystem engineers. Their dam-building and canal-digging help slow water flow, restore water tables, filter toxins, and create vital habitats for wildlife and fish—all at no cost to taxpayers.

At Soul River Inc., we believe that beavers represent a vital and natural solution to these water quality issues. Research consistently shows that beaver dam complexes help restore water quality by slowing water, allowing sediment to settle, and removing pollutants such as heavy metals and pesticides from our waterways. These natural systems also provide critical benefits such as improving the health of aquatic habitats, supporting biodiversity, and mitigating the effects of climate change through enhanced water retention and flood management.

HB 3932 will close hunting and trapping of beavers on impaired waterways on public lands, allowing them to remain in these critical areas long enough to perform their natural functions. As an organization that works closely with communities who are often most impacted by environmental degradation, including communities of color and underserved populations, we recognize that the health of our waterways directly impacts the health of our people.

We urge you to continue your leadership on this issue and support the passage of HB 3932—a natural solution to our water crisis. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chad Brown, President Soul River Inc.