

Submitter: Hillary Williams
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2978

Thank you so much for giving time to this critical issue. Living in Bend, I travel most days on the parkway as well as all highways in the state. The scene on our roadways is absolutely devastating. Sometimes whole herds of deer, massive beautiful bucks, raccoons, skunks, badgers, coyotes, and once we even encountered a struck mountain lion. We have seen mother deer unable to leave the road while her dead fawn lays alongside. I have come upon deer who are not yet dead, but disabled in the roadway and terrified of the final blow of bumper-to-bumper high speed traffic. I have seen animals scrambling on sheer ice and vehicles swerving into one another to avoid collision. We have witnessed elk hit in the more remote areas south and west. To be honest, I feel that these incidents are a long-lasting trauma for me. I no longer drive comfortably on our roadways. I am terrified of either hitting a wild animal myself, or having to witness more of the above. The scenes are imprinted on my mind in a way that brings tears to my eyes. I have opted to take the long way to avoid certain sections of road. I also feel like I would rather stay home, which is not a great way to live. Recently when driving between Bend and Klamath Falls, I noticed a difference due to the wildlife passages and fencing. This is so amazing to see. I cannot imagine a reason not to do this in every high volume wildlife space. Our communities have grown exponentially and without needed infrastructure. Many people moving here are not wildlife-aware, or sensitive. I have tried writing both ODOT and the City of Bend, with either no options or no response. Please address this tragedy immediately, and honor one aspect of what makes Oregon so special, the wild and natural life among us. I would ask that an expansion of this funding be done beyond the corridors currently up for discussion, and look at the parkway running through Bend where almost every day I drive to work spring, summer, and fall...there are struck deer. I appreciate your time and attention.