



April 14, 2025

Attention: Chair Golden and Committee Members
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

RE: HB 2978A: Funding for Wildlife Crossings

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), special districts governed by elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers as well as federal, state, and nonprofit partners, providing technical support and assistance in seeking project funding.

Wildlife crossings have shown a reduction in wildlife collisions with vehicles at a rate of 90%. The recent Washington State University study has calculated a savings of \$235,000-\$443,000 annually from substantial damage to vehicles and occupants.

We support the Oregon Department of Transportation partnering with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and other state and federal agencies to provide our citizens and our wildlife necessary protections. Objectives described in the bill will coordinate agency support to access grant opportunities and other investment.

Successfully implemented, crossings can greatly reduce the likelihood of collisions and save lives, provide a safe corridor for animal transit and help reduce the ecological impact of highways by reconnecting animal habitats. We strongly urge enacting HB 2978A this session.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "A. Kreiner", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Andrea Kreiner,
Executive Director
Oregon Association of Conservation Districts