



April 15, 2025

RE: COIN Testimony in Support of HB 2978 A

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources, Senators, Girod, Prozanski, and Taylor,

I am writing on behalf of the Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network - COIN - to urge you to support HB 2978 A. Through its wildlife crossings program, Oregon has made good progress in (1) improving the ability of wildlife to access migration routes and connect to habitat; and (2) importantly, in reducing vehicle-wildlife collisions.

COIN is made up of Indivisible groups from across Oregon and has its own Climate Energy Environment (CEE) Team that collaborates with organizations throughout the Pacific Northwest, in part, to conserve and protect our natural resources including wildlife and their habitat.

The Wildlife Crossings Act of 2019 has been successful in Oregon in reducing wildlife-vehicle collisions. <https://columbiainsight.org/on-i-5-oregon-will-get-its-first-wildlife-overpass> But people continue to die or sustain injuries in wildlife-vehicle collisions and animals are killed in significant numbers. Also, wildlife connectivity to habitat is more important than ever as climate change and development destroy and degrade habitat at an alarming rate. The proposed improvements are sorely needed to improve protections for people and wildlife on our highways.

This bill would improve coordination between ODOT and ODFW in reducing the risks of vehicle-wildlife collisions and promoting wildlife connectivity with requirements for feasibility studies and updates to materials to incorporate wildlife crossing and wildlife-vehicle reduction features into highway design and construction; training on interaction of transportation systems and wildlife and habitats, directives to incorporate and minimize impacts to wildlife corridors and habitat connectivity in transportation infrastructure; development of a list or priority projects to reduce wildlife-vehicle collisions, and establishment of an advisory group to promote collaboration and sharing of resources among government and community stakeholders.

HB 2978 A is a good example of a bill that will give our government agencies the tools they need to accomplish our goals, in this case, protection of the public and wildlife on our highways. Please vote yes on HB 2978 A.

Laura Allen, on behalf of Consolidated Oregon Indivisible Network - COIN