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On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Capital Construction

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5505

I have grown up fishing the Mckenzie river my whole life. My Dad was a fishing guide for a few years mainly targeting steelhead. The production of trout, steelhead and Salmon at the Leaburg fish hatchery is vital to the health of our local community. The effects of not funding and ultimately the closure of our hatcheries will have negative effects seen in the local economy as well as the mental and physical health of those who love to fish on our local lakes and streams. From loss in revenue at the local convenient stores as fishermen fuel up and grab a quick bite to eat before hitting the water to the bigger local companies like Bimart or any other outdoor recreational companies that supply us with bait and tackle to help us fishermen be successful in the field, these businesses will suffer major economic impacts. Not to mention the fishing guides that frequently take clients on our local bodies of water to help someone catch fish. These types of businesses will suffer from loss of funding to our hatcheries.

Getting people outdoors to enjoy some fresh air and physical activity boosts the health and culture Oregon is famous for. As hatcheries go away and fishing declines people will not be outdoors nearly as much. Traditions of taking your kids and grandkids out fishing will cease thus amplifying the mental health crisis that we experience more than any other states with the long rainy season we experience. Staying indoors more isn't a good solution. Also a huge attraction to people moving to Oregon is the sense of adventure and outdoor activities that we have the privilege to enjoy. But as we see that chipped away with things like hatcheries being defunded the desire for people to move to Oregon will be much less. This too has negative effects on our economy.

Lastly, there is a major move to take down every dam and hatchery that can be removed as soon as possible. The sentiment is good and I wish people could join hands and work together to make these moves wisely. Yes the health of these rivers is huge, and dams and hatcheries aren't great for our native fish populations. But removing these things tomorrow and pretending that native fish populations will just automatically rebound is foolish. If we rid our rivers of hatchery fish, the only fish that will be left for currently uncontrolled predation from sea lions, cormorants, merganzers, walleye, pike minnow and us humans, are native fish. I see those being completely wiped out very quickly unless we protect them as they enter our rivers which currently we do not. I will support a movement for native fish more seriously when I see us begin to seriously cull the populations of seals, cormorants, merganzers, walleye and pike minnow. Until then it is fools gold to defund hatcheries

and rip out as many dams as possible only to see our natives smolts and adult fish gobbled up by out of control populations of predators. There are many other factors like ocean conditions, genetics and so on that play into this very complex issue if dwindling fish populations, but ultimately we humans can only control a few and one of those is predation.

Please fund our hatcheries, I dream of the days that I will be able to take my children on the Mckenzie river to catch summer steelhead like my Dad did with me and countless other families have done for generations.

Thank you