



April 16, 2025

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Amber Myre, and I am CEO at Living Opportunities, a nonprofit organization committed for over 50 years to supporting individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities (I/DD) in leading fulfilling lives in our communities. I am writing today in strong support of House Bill 2163, which recognizes individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities as qualifying persons with disabilities under Oregon's wildlife laws for the purposes of angling and shellfish harvesting.

At Living Opportunities, we advocate for the full inclusion and participation of individuals with I/DD in all aspects of life, including outdoor recreation. Fishing and shellfish harvesting are not only recreational activities but also valuable opportunities for individuals with disabilities to engage with their communities, develop new skills, and experience the joy of Oregon's natural environment. However, current legal classifications create barriers that exclude many individuals with I/DD from these experiences.

By classifying individuals with documented intellectual or developmental disabilities as eligible under the wildlife laws, HB 2163 removes an unnecessary obstacle and ensures that more Oregonians can fully participate in outdoor activities. This bill acknowledges the diverse needs of individuals with disabilities and allows for equitable access to angling and shellfish harvesting by providing necessary accommodations and recognition under the law.

Outdoor access and recreational engagement are critical to the mental, emotional, and social well-being of people with I/DD. Many individuals we support have a strong interest in outdoor activities but have faced unnecessary challenges due to restrictive policies. By passing HB 2163, Oregon will take an important step toward fostering inclusivity and enabling individuals with disabilities to enjoy the same rights and privileges as their peers.

We urge you to support HB 2163 to ensure that individuals with I/DD are granted equal access to Oregon's outdoor recreation opportunities. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

**Amber Myre**

CEO, Living Opportunities