



OREGON HUNTERS ASSOCIATION

Protecting Oregon's Wildlife, Habitat and Hunting Heritage

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Ways & Means Joint Subcommittee on Education
RE: HB 2167

Co-Chairs Sollman and Ruiz, Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Hunters Association (OHA) is Oregon's largest state-centric hunter conservation organization, representing 12,000 sportsmen and women throughout 26 chapters in the state. Our mission statement is 'to protect Oregon's wildlife, habitat, and hunting heritage' and we strongly support science-based wildlife and habitat management.

OHA is uniquely invested in the Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (OVDL) due to its importance in the field of wildlife disease. The OVDL facility is fully accredited by the American Association of Veterinary Laboratory Diagnostics and provides an immense value to Oregonians. The breadth of testing the OVDL processes benefits both Oregonians and our wildlife and environment.

The OVDL is multi-functional and multi-specific in its coverage of human, domestic, and wild animal health by supporting both large and small animal veterinarians, providing crucial testing capacity during the COVID pandemic, and pioneering Oregon's in-state testing for chronic wasting disease (CWD).

CWD, a 100% fatal prion disease specific to deer, elk, and moose, presents a serious threat to Oregon's wildlife populations with recent cases found in Idaho, California, and Washington. Oregon is investing in a proactive response to the threat of CWD by establishing in-state testing facilities at the OVDL. In 2024, the Legislature appropriated \$1.9 million to the OVDL for specific work on CWD and zoonotic diseases. This amount funded the initial phases of the in-state testing process and OHA encourages the legislature to continue to invest in the OVDL's continued work on CWD and zoonotic diseases.

In addition to CWD, there are many disease issues facing Oregon's wildlife populations, from Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza in our birds to Mycoplasma Ovipneumonia in our wild goat and sheep populations. We strongly urge expanded funding for the OVDL as an investment in Oregon's wildlife health.

OHA supports the investment in wildlife health through funding the Oregon Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory.

Thank you for your time,
Amy Patrick
Policy Director