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March 10, 2025

Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Co-Chair Senator Kate Lieber
Co-Chair Representative Tawna Sanchez
900 Court St. NE, H-273,
Salem, Oregon 97301

Delivered Electronically to: Sen.KateLieber@oregonlegislature.gov and
Rep.TawnaSanchez@oregonlegislature.gov

Re: Willamette Falls Trust

Dear Co-Chairs and Joint Committee Members,

The Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) support Willamette Falls Trust's request to the State of Oregon to invest in and take ownership of PGE's Moore's Island and the uplands for the benefit of all Oregonians. This State action of acquisition is critical to the long-term protection of the public treasure that is Willamette Falls. We encourage you and your office to act expeditiously on this request.

Through our Treaty of 1855 with the United States, 12 Stat. 945, our ancestors ceded millions of acres of land to the United States to, among other things, secure and maintain access to tribal First Foods - water, fish, roots and berries, and the habitats and environmental conditions that support and sustain them, then, now and forever. We believe the purchase of the PGE lands by the State ensures access once again to this sacred site and to our traditional First Foods. The CTUIR are forever connected to Willamette Falls as well, by the tragic hanging of our tribal members, the Five Cayuse Men on June 3, 1850. This event is forever embedded in our history and remains marked by ceremony to honor these men.

Like other tribes in the Pacific Northwest, the CTUIR possesses longstanding cultural and economic ties to Willamette Falls. Since time immemorial, our Tribal members have travelled to this site to gather foods, trade with other tribes and interact with our tribal neighbors. Today our members continue these traditions,

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visiting the Falls to both enjoy the bounty of resources the Falls afford and to share ecological knowledge and oral histories passed from generation to generation.

The CTUIR is pleased to work alongside the other tribes of the Willamette Falls Trust: the Confederated Tribes of the Siletz Indians, the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation, and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon. Together, we share a voice in the stewarding and land use planning for this sacred site, and share a vision that seeks to restore, rehabilitate, and heal the landscape from 150 years of industrialization.

The State's investment and reclamation of this site will guarantee that all Oregonians and visitors have access to, and enjoy the beauty and grandeur of, Willamette Falls. We hope you recognize the tremendous impact your investment will have and the wide range of contributions it will make to the quality of life and economies of the municipal, tribal, State and larger region.

Sincerely,

for 

Gary I. Burke, Chairman
Board of Trustees

CC: Representative Bobby Levy
Representative Greg Smith
Senator Todd Nash