

Submitter: Melanie Klym

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation Reinvestment

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2025

Thank you for recognizing that transportation infrastructure affects and is affected by Oregon's amazing ecosystems. I strongly support the proposed funding of \$10M/biennium for Wildlife Crossings. Each year in Oregon, an average of four people die and 521 people are seriously injured in vehicle-wildlife collisions. In addition, more than 14,500,000 animals are killed on Oregon's roadways each year. Based on this high rate of collisions, Oregon's wildlife-vehicle collision problem costs Oregonians more than \$132 million every year. Fortunately, wildlife crossing structures such as overpasses, underpasses, and fencing are a proven solution to improving motorist safety and wildlife passage. With only five crossing structures and no dedicated funding, Oregon lags far behind our western state counterparts in implementing solutions to address the state's wildlife-vehicle collision problem. The funding needed to address this problem is immense. For example, the anticipated total funding needed for projects currently in development across the state is over \$200,000,000, with other project areas in the process of coming online. On Highway 20 in Central Oregon, the Bend to Suttle Lake Wildlife Passage Initiative's 2024 Corridor Feasibility Study identified a funding need of \$107,384,400 to build 11 under- and overcrossings along one of the most dangerous roads in Oregon. \$10 million per biennium would provide an important and consistent funding mechanism to address our state's wildlife-vehicle collision problem and improve the safety of Oregon's roadways.