

*Co-Chairs Gorsek and McLain, Co-Vice
Chairs Starr and Boshart Davis, and
Members of the Committee,*

*I implore you to support HB 2025 Sections
111 and 117, which establish the Oregon
Department of Transportation (ODOT)
Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reduction Fund at
an annual rate of \$10 million per biennium.*

*Habitat loss and fragmentation are making it
harder for wildlife to migrate and disperse to
where they need to go to survive. For many
species in Oregon, our highways are one of
the biggest challenges to their survival. As a
case in point, many vulnerable wildlife
species are killed in vehicle collisions every
year on our roadways. This includes
charismatic species like Pacific marten and
wolves. It also includes important game
species such as the mule deer. In fact mule
deer are the most commonly hit animal in
Oregon and its population has declined by
over 50% in recent years.*

Wildlife-vehicle collisions also take a costly toll on people. According to ODOT, there are over 7,000 collisions per year resulting in over 500 serious human injuries and four fatalities. This is the highest rate among West Coast states. Millions of dollars of damage are incurred every year from such collisions. The good news is that we know that wildlife crossings work. The Lava Butte underpass on HWY 97 in central Oregon has reduced deer collisions by over 90% since construction.

HB 2025 Sections 111 and 117 build upon past efforts of the Legislature to address the problem of the loss of wildlife connectivity and the high rate of wildlife-vehicle collisions by establishing and sustainably funding the “Wildlife-Vehicle Collision Reduction Fund.” This would be a significant step in addressing the safety and environmental consequences of habitat fragmentation caused by roadways and would position Oregon alongside Utah

as the only state with annual funding for wildlife crossings.

As a concerned Oregonian I hope you will strongly consider this request!

*Sincerely,
Julia Spilker*