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**From:** mitch riggin <mitchriggin@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 7, 2018 3:31 PM  
**To:** HAGNR Exhibits  
**Subject:** Oppose HB 4029

House Committee on Agriculture and National Resources  
Representative Brian Clem, Chair  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Clem, Vice-Chairs McLain and Sprenger and members of the Committee:

As a resident of Bend, I, along with thousands of other residents know how important community and outdoor recreation is to us, that's why we live here. Science is proving how important connecting with the outdoors is for us as well. That's why it's so important to have trail accessibility and connectivity. The trails link one neighborhood to the next, one town to the next, one community to the next. This proposed footbridge would enable that accessibility and connection to occur.

Right now the the neighborhoods in south west Bend are cut off to the trail system, that's about 10,000 people. We have to DRIVE from our homes about 25+/- minute or 11-16 mile drive, pending on starting point and traffic, to the end of the existing Deschutes River Trail at Rim Rock Park. This footbridge would eliminate that drive us. It will get people out of our cars, helping alleviate severely overburdened streets. Getting people out of our cars and on to trails, connecting with the outdoors, the wildlife, the community... what we really want to be doing, not sitting in traffic in our cars. A survey conducted in the spring of 2017 showed that 72% of the respondents supported completing a footbridge, while 14% opposed.

Yes, there are a few people fighting this bridge tooth and nail showing NIMBYism (Not In My Backyard) at it finest, or should I say its worst. Those few residents are stating that "it will effect the wildlife". Houses being built in the area will effect wildlife significantly more than any footbridge. On the other hand, if it is decided through collaborative process that the footbridge is the best option, Bend Parks and Rec Department would provide resources to improve the riverbank habitat, trail management, reduce erosion and establish new wetlands. This improvement would help lessen the detrimental impacts of the lots scraping building of the McMansions.

There is an existing footbridge, called South Canyon Footbridge at the current southern most footbridge over the Deschutes River. This footbridge clearly shows that there can be a balance with nature and human development. It is imperative to keep the planning and development process left in the hands of both the City of Bend and Deschutes County. It would give us the most flexibility and options. South Canyon Footbridge is a great example of that process.

HB 4029 is in conflict with the Bend Transportation System Plan, the Deschutes Greenway Study, and the Bend Park and Recreation District's Trail Plan. These plans have been in place for at least two decades. The Deschutes National Forest Alternative Transportation Plan further supports the bridge if environmental concerns can be addressed. All of these plans call for a bridge to connect southern Bend to the Deschutes National Forest in the same location that the District board has proposed the bridge to be located.

I oppose HB 4029. I ask that you too oppose HB 4029. This proposed footbridge has been in the plans for many agencies for at least 20 years. It is a vital piece to connecting neighbors, neighborhoods and communities. It will get people out of our cars. It has overwhelming local support. And who knows, maybe the footbridge isn't the best option, but the power needs to stay local so we can collaboratively figure that out for ourselves. And if it does get installed, we will do proper conservation and restoration to minimize the impact.

So again, please oppose HB 4029.

Sincerely,  
Korina Riggin  
Bend resident