



The Klamath Tribes

SB 1552

Testimony of the Klamath Tribes of Oregon Submitted to the Senate Committee on Business and Transportation

February 14, 2018

THE KLAMATH TRIBES OPPOSE SB 1552

The Klamath Tribes, a federally recognized Native American Nation, consists of three Native American tribes who traditionally inhabited Southern Oregon and Northern California: the Klamath, Modoc and Yahooskin Band of Snake Indians. The Tribes' headquarters are located in Chiloquin, Oregon, in the heart of the Upper Klamath River Basin. The Tribes' 1864 Treaty with the United States reserved hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering rights for the Tribes and its members.

The Klamath Tribes oppose Section 8 of the bill concerning funds for Klamath Dam Removal. The bill would abolish the existing trust fund that was created to fund dam removal. Dam removal is supported by a wide coalition of interests in Oregon and California, including the owners and operators of the dams. In fact, the owners who hold the licenses for the dams are currently seeking permission from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to transfer and ultimately terminate the licenses in order for dam removal to proceed.

Removal of the dams is scheduled to commence in 2020, which makes the timeline set forth in SB 1552 impossible on its face to meet. Eliminating the trust fund to remove the dams is directly contrary to the wishes of many Klamath Basin stakeholders and would thwart years of careful planning and consensus building around the removal.



More importantly, the dams destroyed salmon habitat and salmon runs that were reserved under the Tribes' treaty with the United States in 1864. The trust funds for dam removal are critical to restoring the treaty resources of the Klamath Tribes. Removing the funds that are necessary for dam removal will also impact commercial and recreational fishing and the interest of the public in the Klamath River's resources across two states.

We urge the Committee to reject this bill.

Please do not hesitate to direct any questions to Chairman Don Gentry at Don.Gentry@klamathtribes.com or Douglas MacCourt at dmaccourt@rosettela.com.

Thank you.

