



**LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS®
OF OREGON**

The League of Women Voters of Oregon is a 97-year-old grassroots nonpartisan political organization that encourages informed and active participation in government. We envision informed Oregonians participating in a fully accessible, responsive, and transparent government to achieve the common good. LWVOR Legislative Action is based on advocacy positions formed through studies and member consensus. The League never supports or opposes any candidate or political party.

June 5, 2017

To: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources
Senator Lew Frederick and Representative Brad Witt, Co-Chairs

Re: SB 847 – Trust Land Transfer Program and Establishment of a Fund – **Support**

The League of Women Voters of the United States believes that natural resources such as forests and the animals and plants living within them should be managed as interrelated parts of life-supporting ecosystems. Resources should be conserved and protected to assure their future availability. We need to preserve the physical, chemical and biological integrity of ecosystems and to protect public health. With any final outcome by the trust lands transfer process, government protections should be upheld.

In part, because of our recent studies (“[Coastal and Nearshore Oregon: Using and Protecting Our Natural Resources](#)”, and “[Water in Oregon-Not a Drop to Waste](#)”), we favor careful landscape management to insure protection of rivers and streams, as well as the endangered salmon and other fish in our public lands. We note that another iconic creature is our Greater Sage Grouse, which also might benefit in the future with this legislation. SB 847 will allow the state to protect and preserve natural, scenic, cultural, historic, and wildlife sites now owned by the Common School Fund should they become threatened because of the need to provide revenue for the Common School Fund.

We have reviewed Senate Bill 847, which creates a process for the State Land Board, Department of State Lands and Legislative Assembly to coordinate transfer of certain trust lands managed for the benefit of the Common School Fund, that have limited performance potential as assets of the Common School Fund, to certain other public bodies better positioned to manage lands for benefit of the public. Any decision regarding future ownership and management of these lands by state agencies will be a part of future discussions and should not be a part of passage of this policy.

SB 847 creates a new Fund to provide an opportunity for outside donations to the fund to be accepted by the state to pay for such transfers. Other states have used this method when public lands are threatened in order to preserve them for future generations. Our schools and protection of our forests, rangelands and wetlands are all important and one should not have to be chosen at the expense of the other. This bill provides a solution that allows special places to remain public and decouples them from the Common School Fund.

In conclusion, the League supports SB 847 as a good long-term solution to protect future threatened Common School Fund lands.

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this legislation.

Handwritten signature of Norman Turrill in black ink.

Norman Turrill
LWVOR President

Handwritten signature of Peggy Lynch in black ink.

Peggy Lynch
LWVOR Natural Resources Coordinator

cc: Jason Miner, Governor’s Natural Resources Policy Director (Jason.Miner@oregon.gov)
Stephen Elzinga, Secretary of State’s Legislative Director (stephen.elzinga@state.or.us)
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