



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

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With Passage in Senate Today, Bill Supporting Conservation Land Trusts Heads to Governor

*A bill sponsored by Representative Lisa Fragala and Senator Floyd Prozanski makes it easier
for conservation nonprofits to purchase land*

SALEM, OR – Conserving land helps keep Oregon’s environment clean and our views beautiful, and under a bill now passed in both houses of the Legislature, barriers are lower for nonprofit organizations, local governments, and tribes to acquire land and protect it, instead of developing it.

“This bill is a step towards better protections of our drinking water, natural resources, and spaces for recreation. I am proud to have helped introduce this policy to support conservation efforts in our state,” said Representative Lisa Fragala, one of the bill's Chief Sponsors.

Land trusts often face long delays in purchasing land due to lot requirements related to development, even though these nonprofits plan to use the land for conservation purposes. Under House Bill 2256, if a nonprofit purchases a piece of land that hasn’t been established as a developable lot and uses it for conservation, they and the seller are protected from lawsuits over the lot status.

“This bill makes it easier to transfer land to conservation nonprofits, allowing efforts for drinking water preservation and wildlife restoration to move forward.” said Senator Floyd Prozanski, one of the Chief Sponsors of HB 2256.

Land trusts support conservation by preserving natural habitats, forests, and farmland; maintaining scenic views and open space; protecting water and air quality; and conserving cultural, historical or archeological sites.

“When good opportunities arise to protect drinking water sources in the forest, we should move quickly to do so,” said Joe Moll, Executive Director of the McKenzie River Trust. “This legislation is a good step in that direction.” Moll’s nonprofit works throughout the McKenzie watershed to safeguard Eugene’s water source.

“The Eugene Water and Electric Board (EWEB) enthusiastically supports the passage of HB 2256,” said John Barofsky, EWEB board member. “EWEB regularly collaborates with land trust

nonprofits and supports the benefits of land conservation to help protect municipal drinking water supplies, increase fire resiliency, and enhance our community's recreational spaces."

House Bill 2256 passed the Oregon Senate today in a vote of 17 to 11. It now heads to the Governor for her signature.

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