



*From the Desk of  
Senator Dembrow  
M. P. Dembrow*

## **Never Again Coalition<sup>1</sup> and Enough Project Urge a Yes Vote on SB 471, Conflict Mineral Procurement Bill**

**Oregon should institute responsible electronic purchasing through a state procurement bill that would require all state-level contracts take into consideration the presence of conflict minerals.** Conflict minerals have fueled and continue to help sustain the ongoing conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo (Congo) that has resulted in the deaths of more than 5.4 million people. Armed groups have generated hundreds of millions of dollars by illegally extracting and smuggling tin, tantalum, tungsten, and gold (3TG). These minerals eventually end up in consumer products such as computers and cell phones. Companies have the opportunity to contribute to peace in the Congo by making sure that the minerals they use in their products do not come from areas controlled by armed groups. But they will not take action unless their consumers, including states, demand it.

**SB 471 would make Oregon the third state in the country to enact legislation that places a preference on companies that are working to source conflict-free minerals for their products.** State-level legislation is a powerful way to amplify consumers' demand for companies to prioritize conflict-free sourcing by institutionalizing the demand for conflict-free products. SB 471 links to existing international guidelines and reporting mechanisms that companies should already be implementing in compliance with Section 1502 of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act became law. Therefore, the infrastructure is already in place for implementing an Oregon policy and should not place an undue burden on the State or on businesses.

**The State of Oregon has a chance to play an important role in bringing safety and economic stability to the Congo.** It is clear that the creation of transparent supply chains has made a remarkable difference in the 3T mining sector in Congo. In 2016, a study found that 79 percent of miners at 3T mines surveyed in Congo now work in conflict-free mines. This is a major change, as the United Nations stated in 2010 that almost every mining deposit was controlled by a military group. This momentum to remove armed groups from the mining sector in Congo will only continue through sustained consumer demand.

**Never Again Coalition and Enough Project urge you to support SB 471.**

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<sup>1</sup>Never Again Coalition is a Portland-based organization working on mass atrocity and genocide prevention and awareness. Responding to violence in Sudan, South Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo and Burma, they strive to revitalize the phrase "Never Again."