



**2019 RDPO Policy Committee
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**Regional Disaster Preparedness
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Joint Committee on Ways and Means, Sub-Committee on Natural Resources
Attn: Senator Kathleen Taylor and Representative Jeff Reardon
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Support for A More Stable and Sustainable Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries

Dear Co-Chairs Senator Taylor and Representative Reardon, and members of the Committee:

On behalf of the Regional Disaster Preparedness Organization (RDPO), I write to express our desire to see a more financially sustainable and organizationally viable Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI).

The RDPO is a bi-state partnership of local and regional government agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private-sector stakeholders representing the Portland metropolitan region. The region geographically encompasses Clackamas, Columbia, Multnomah, and Washington Counties in Oregon, and Clark County in Washington. Through strategic and coordinated planning, training, and exercising, and investing in technology and specialized equipment, the RDPO works collaboratively to increase the region's preparedness and resiliency to disasters.

Earlier this week we learned your committee, along with Governor Brown, decided against a plan to dissolve DOGAMI next year, dividing its remaining staff and functions among two other state agencies. The RDPO congratulates you on this wise decision. Today, we understand your committee is reviewing several options for funding DOGAMI over the next couple of years. **The RDPO urges your committee to increase the general funding of DOGAMI, enabling the organization to fund more of its core hazard research program activities rather than relying on federal grants.**

When RDPO partners sought to have updated earthquake impact data, analysis, and maps for our region a few years ago, we reached out to DOGAMI. To get the work completed meant we had to provide all the funding. We were fortunate to have secured Department of Homeland Security/Urban Areas Security Initiative grant funds to commission the work. We know not all jurisdictions around the state have similar means. For both equity reasons as well as to ensure we have a statewide picture of our hazard risk, it behooves the Oregon Legislative Assembly and Governor Brown to ensure that DOGAMI's core program services are funded and offered statewide.

Finally, the RDPO is aware that the budgetary and management issues DOGAMI has been working to overcome in recent years have, in part, led to the organization losing some of its finest scientists/researchers. We, therefore, also urge your committee to work to support a sustainable funding level that will help the agency rebuild a solid foundation of subject matter experts to support its vital work into the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to submit testimony on this important topic.

Denise A. Barrett 
RDPO Managing Director