



March 16, 2021

To House Committee on Veterans and Emergency Management

From: Oregon Association of Conservation Districts

Re: Support for HB 3160 – Insurance Surcharge for Wildfire

Chair Evans and Committee Members,

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), special districts governed by elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers as well as federal, state, and nonprofit partners.

OACD supports HB 3160 which requires insurers to collect \$10 for casualty and property insurance policies and remit the funds to the State for placement in the Oregon Wildfire Preparedness Community Protection Fund. This money is then distributed to the State Fire Marshall, the State Forestry Department and the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board for specified purposes.

OACD recognizes that substantial funding is needed in Oregon to address wildfire preparation and restoration, that the scope of work in the bill is critically important, and that the work has a nexus with property insurance.

SWCDs across the state help to implement many of the types of work authorized under this bill including reforestation, watershed rehabilitation, drinking water protection, slope stabilization and erosion control, improving landscape resiliency, and reducing hazardous fuel levels. OACD and SWCDs work closely with the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board and the State Forestry Department and would welcome the opportunity to make sure that the programs in this HB 3160 are successfully implemented.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into your decision-making process.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stan Dean".

Stan Dean, Advocacy Committee Chair
Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
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