



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

PO Box 12339 • Salem, Oregon 97309-0339 • (503) 364-1330 • Fax (503) 364-0836

March 23, 2021

The Honorable Brad Witt, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: HB 2722 – Wildfire Omnibus Bill (**SUPPORT**)

Chair Witt, Vice Chairs Breese-Iverson and Hudson, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Amanda Astor. I am here on behalf of the Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL) as their forest policy manager.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2722 today.

I will be working off of the testimony you just heard from Mr. Williams and will be primarily focusing on topics surrounding forest resiliency and the all-lands approach necessary to achieve the goals of the Governor's Council on Wildfire Response.

First, we are prioritizing work on those lands (both forestland and rangeland) and communities identified as highest risk by the Council.

Much of the work to achieve forest and rangeland resiliency is needed on federal lands. Thankfully, ODF already has a Federal Forest Restoration program that collaborates with federal partners to increase the pace and scale of federal forest restoration across Oregon. This existing program has the ability to achieve the Governor's Wildfire Council recommendations related to federal lands without the need for additional rulemaking through amendments to ORS 526.271, ORS 526.274 and ORS 526.275. As mentioned by my colleagues, we want work off of existing structure and not reinventing the wheel.

Conversely, there are high risks to non-federal lands and communities that could benefit from additional authority within the department that focuses work on non-federal lands to address the wildfire crisis. This would include collaboration with stakeholders through the process of developing partner project selection criteria. We want to include stakeholder voices, but we do not want to slow down the process to get work done on the ground. Again, the amendments you will see to HB 2722 work off of existing processes in ODF's Partnerships and Planning Program.

As Mr. Williams noted we will be adding additional resilience goals for forestlands and rangelands as well.

By building upon the current authorities, programs and statutes that the department already has on federal lands but filling in the gap on non-federal lands with a new program, the quickest and most efficient path forward to meet the Governor's Wildfire Council recommendations for forest resiliency can be achieved.

We are in SUPPORT of HB 2722. Thank you and I am available for any questions.