

To: Senator Golden and Members of the Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery Committee  
From: Cathy Spofford  
Date: April 6, 2021  
Re: SB 762 – Wildfire Response and Recovery

I am writing to request that in crafting Senate Bill 762 you focus on rebuilding and defending our communities that are impacted by wildfires not on logging public forests far away from homes. The recent fires in Oregon were not caused by a lack of forest management but by strong easterly winds and drought conditions in large part caused by climate change. As our climate crisis continues to worsen, we can expect more climate fueled fires. Therefore, we need to focus on supporting community resiliency rather than spend time and resources logging land miles away from homes. Although we live in Portland, we own a cabin in Camp Sherman that has been in the family for over 30 years. We have worked to make our home more fire resistant by installing a new metal roof, getting a new wood stove with ember proof vents, and creating defensible space around our cabin. Although we may not be able to stop wildfire, we can keep our communities and our homes safe from flames. The town of Sisters has been greatly impacted by forest fires and the resulting smoke from them. Businesses have suffered and people's incomes have been jeopardized. Many people may not be able to afford to harden their homes to make them more fire resistant without some form of assistance. Wildfire policy must center on helping vulnerable rural communities and prioritize protecting them from the impact of fire to come. Thinning and logging forests far from communities is not an effective strategy at reducing wildfire severity. We need to focus on fuel reduction activities where it has the most effect, adjacent to communities and especially within 60 to 100 feet of structures.

Respectfully

Cathy Spofford