

Chair Golden and Members of the Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery:

I am submitting these comments in support of SB 762. As a physician in Salem, this past year I experienced firsthand the devastating impacts of wildfire smoke on public health and our communities. The toxic air quality we had for weeks here in Salem was unpleasant and unhealthy for everyone, and life-threatening for those with preexisting respiratory illness. It is vital that Oregon take action now to avoid a repeat of this untenable situation.

Efforts to prepare for wildfires should be done in a comprehensive way, with science-based policies and practices that make our communities and forests more resilient. The state has discussed this issue for the past few years, both with the Wildfire Council and in the legislature, and now is the time to act.

SB 762 would help mitigate wildfire risk while reducing the frequency and severity of future wildfires. I hope you will support this legislation to put Oregon on the right path toward living safely with a warmer, drier climate. We cannot wait for another wildfire season to pass by without getting started.

Thank you for considering my input.

David Harrison, MD