



April 26, 2021

Senator Gorsek and Representative Sollman, Co-Chairs
Joint Committee on Ways & Means Subcommittee on Public Safety
Oregon State Capitol
Via remote submission – Oregon Legislative Information System

Dear Co-Chairs Gorsek, Sollman, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Fire Chiefs Association, thank you for the opportunity to share our support for HB 5028, the Oregon State Police Budget Bill. HB 5028 contains the budget for the Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM), a critical partner in our fire and life safety efforts. We ask for your support of their 2021-2023 budget in order to continue and improve our statewide emergency response system.

Oregon experienced historic loss in 2020 from the more than 2,100 fires that burnt a total over a million acres, thousands of homes, and caused immense turmoil. The Fire Service relied on our partnership with the Oregon State Fire Marshal in our mobilization and response efforts to fight many of those fires and protect life and property. On top of their critical role in wildfire response, the State Fire Marshal protects the safety of Oregonians daily through HazMat response, Incident Management Teams, Search and Rescue, Fire Inspection and Investigation, State Emergency Mobilization, and more.

The Oregon Fire Chiefs Association looks forward to continuing and strengthening our partnership with the Oregon State Fire Marshal. The budget for OSFM in HB 5028 and HB 2927, which will also come before your committee this session, provides the needed resources and infrastructure to improve Oregon's wildfire prevention and response strategy and keep Oregonians safe.

Oregon has already experienced over 70 fires in 2021 with fire danger at higher risk than normal in several areas of the state. We cannot afford to delay action on efforts to prevent the kind of loss we saw in 2020.

We ask for your support of HB 5028 and the Office of the State Fire Marshal.

Thank you for your consideration,

Chief Fred Charlton, Clackamas Fire District 1
Chief Roger Johnson, Sisters Fire
Chief Les Hallman, Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue