

To: Senate Committee on Rules

<https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021r1/testimony/rules>

Re: Endorsement of SB863

This amendment will enhance the ability of Rural Fire Protection Districts to better serve and protect their residents and properties.

The authority to provide fire evacuation routes is one more tool in the tool kit. The RFPD is already authorized to provide alarm to residents, foster measures to inhibit fires, undertake fire suppression, and provide emergency medical service. Adding developing fire evacuation routes to that list simply makes safe and sound sense.

If SB863 is passed, a RFPD would be authorized to:

1. Provide an evacuation route where existing access is presently inadequate.
2. Provide an alternative evacuation route if the existing access suddenly became blocked or a problem.
3. Provide an alternative route for evacuation use to maintain the existing route available for emergency vehicles and firefighting apparatus.

This legislation would not require a RFPD to undertake a development of a fire evacuation route. RFPD Board members elected by District residents would continue to exercise their information gathering, analysis, seek public comment and exercise sound discretion to make decisions. No hands are tied. Only opportunities presented.

In view of the growing threat to lives and property presented by wildfires, this legislation makes eminent sense. Please pass it.

Thank you for your consideration of this letter.

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