

I am in opposition to HB 5010, which is the first step to get rid of DOGAMI. This would be an over 3 million cut in the budget with 21 positions to be eliminated during the biennium. The official justification for these cuts is basically that the DOGAMI has overspent and the state needs to save money so cuts here. There is no recognition that this is how a science based agency funding works i.e., varies year by year based on external grants received and the challenges with both meeting the science expectations AND working to find new money, ask any research scientist at OR universities. There is also no recognition that overspend is because there is A LOT of work to do to address OR geological data needs. OR Leg has underfunded an essential science department and now the governor is blaming them for that shortfall. This makes no sense. The saving money argument is weak. 3 million is just a blip on the screen compared to other OR budget items. For example, the Governor's OEM budget for the next biennium is 336.9 million, an 18.7 percent increase from 2019 20 budget. That includes 22.1 million for the OR Youth Challenge Program, a 13.6 percent increase from current budget. While I am very much in support of STEM and Youth in OR its cognitive dissonance to cut science for REAL imminent problems facing Oregonians, such as a Magnitude 9 Cascadia subduction zone earthquake and then train OR Youth to be scientist. Further for OEM preparedness efforts to be effective they need to be informed by the science developed by DOGAMI.

So, what is this really about. The effort to cut DOGAMI, bottom line, looks to be an attempt to further eliminate the work of DOGAMI that stand in developers' way. It's clearly not about budget. Documents provided to this committee from DAS see PPT slide 8 indicate significant cuts along with the language 'maintains essential program work' is a fallacy. The 'essential program work' will not be able to be continued with these significant staff cuts. Cutting this department is going backwards, not forward. If anything, OR should be investing MORE in DOGAMI science based geological knowledge and improving the coordination between OEM and scientist.

OR should learn AND apply lessons from international disasters, such as the Tohoku and Sumatra earthquakes and subsequent tsunamis. Lessons learned captured in international symposiums, research papers and by others, like myself, involved in evaluation of disaster response efforts repeatedly have stated that to prevent the worst impact of disaster countries need to build resilience. In addition, per the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction 'coordination' must occur to reduce risk i.e., 'reduce risk depends on communication and information exchange between the scientific community and politicians' and 'develop and enforce building codes in areas where earthquake and tsunamis are common UNDRR, 2005. DOGAMI currently IS engaged in doing these things, thus helping OR to be more resilient. Dispersing what is left of and eventually getting rid of DOGAMI goes in the opposite direction recommended by international experts. Getting rid of DOGAMI and making these significant cuts will result in reduced evidence generation and science informed policies and yes, weakened building codes such as tsunami inundation zones. We should not be 'penny wise and pound foolish'. Finally, OR earthquake mitigation and preparedness planning should be driven by science not developers or politicians. As a native Oregonian I want to see OR grow and thrive. We CAN develop along the coast AND do it smartly but that requires good science so we build in the right places to prevent loss of life, infrastructure and money. DOGAMI helps us do that.