

I am submitting this testimony to oppose HB5010 and related changes to the Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries. I have been in practice as a consulting engineer and geologist in the State of Oregon for nearly 30 years. My practice is focused on geologic hazards, including landslides, rockfall, and seismic hazards. I can say that DOGAMI is the single most important source of objective scientific and engineering data that I use in my practice nearly every day. The products DOGAMI provides are invaluable and I believe save, not cost, the taxpayers of our State money. Some recent examples of my use of DOGAMI's products in my work include the following.

1. Determining geologic hazards to schools and fire stations in support of State of Oregon Seismic Improvement Grants. DOGAMI online mapping and personal contact with staff have been invaluable in assessing the risk to these facilities and, in particular, at three specific facilities from active faulting. In one case an active fault was determined to cross beneath a fire station and a seismic retrofit was not advised, rather relocating the station was recommended to prevent wasting funds that would not provide a safe fire station in time of need. In two other cases, the risk of active faulting at an elementary and a high school were determined to be low, so typical seismic retrofits were able to proceed without excessive expense for undue improvements.
2. Next week I will be evaluating two harvest units in the Oregon Coast range for their potential to generate debris flow hazards to downslope infrastructure. This assessment is required per the Oregon Department of Forestry's forest practices rules, but DOGAMI's online LiDAR and geologic mapping data are the first sources of information I seek to assess this risk to public safety. This information is invaluable to protect the public downslope of forest lands, many of whom are unaware of the upslope hazards. These are just a few of the scores of examples where DOGAMI information was necessary to address public safety but be good stewards of public funds. Geologic hazards, including seismic, landslide and rockfall hazards, are a significant hazard to public safety and infrastructure. Our ability to assess and recognize these hazards is evolving rapidly with changes in remote detection, numerical modeling, and others. We need DOGAMI's expertise, continued research, and updated mapping products to stay on top of these changes and to protect the public. Reductions in the funding and function of DOGAMI will not be a benefit to taxpayers, but a detriment. It will not improve public safety, but compromise it. I request that DOGAMI be adequately funded and its independent status maintained.