

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 1573

To: Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Kennemer, and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony on SB 1573. The Environmental Caucus of the DPO has worked steadfastly to advocate for sound wildfire protections that are proven. We strove to improve this policy in SB 762 and in providing pressure to the federal funding for reducing threats to homes, communities, and watersheds in the Wild Urban Interface (WUI). This requires careful assessment and guidance which is completely lacking in this bill.

Proven items include programs that assist vulnerable homeowners and landlords to harden their homes and properties by changing out flammable building materials, shrubs and wood chips around homes and maintenance of defensible space in the home ignition zone. We urge legislators to reject SB 1573 and avoid an unwise investment of our statewide public dollars.

The bill is entirely lacking in direction. The thinning would occur on public lands but which ones? Federal, county, state or city? East and westside counties are treated the same, yet westside areas will not thin their way out of an east wind, drought-driven event. Less managed, complex forest areas are not helped by thinning and do better than dense monocultures or even previously cut stands that are exposed to more drying, yet this is often what is created by general thinning.

I was surprised initially that only certain counties were included and now many more have clamored for funding. Spending \$2 million per county without a program directive is illogical.

Thank you for allowing public testimony.

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Chair, DPO Environmental Caucus
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