



**WILLAMETTE PARTNERSHIP**

Joint Committee on Ways & Means  
Subcommittee on Natural Resources  
900 Court Street NE, H-178  
Salem, OR 97301

Re: Dept. of Land Conservation and Development Appropriations Bill

To the Joint Committee on Ways & Means,

It's my distinct pleasure to put Willamette Partnership's support behind the Dept. of Land Conservation and Development's (DLCD) proposed general funds appropriations for the 2023-2025 biennium.

Willamette Partnership has been working at the nexus of community development and conservation for nearly 20 years. Through facilitating collaboratives and working directly with frontline communities, we've seen the impact a changing climate has on the most vulnerable Oregonians firsthand. Wildfires, displacement, water insecurity, and an affordable housing crisis have further exacerbated the stresses on rural communities, Tribal communities, and communities of color.

For those reasons, we're excited to see DLCD's equity-driven approach to solving these problems, in particular through adding staff positions for community engagement and technical assistance for wildfire-affected communities. Wildfire has displaced thousands of Oregonians in the past three years, and increasing housing availability is critically important so that ALL Oregonians have access to the resources they need to stay safe, healthy, and resilient in the face of climate change.

We'd also like to explicitly put our support behind the request to increase funding for the Climate Friendly and Equitable Communities grants program. So many Oregon communities are hungry for climate-smart, equitable infrastructure, but are unable to implement programs due to a lack of capacity and/or resources. Making funds available to local governments to implement CFEC rules is of the utmost importance for these communities, *and* for the State to reach its climate goals.

Equity-driven solutions to cross-sector issues that center community voices, protect natural resources, and look toward a climate-resilient future are what we need to see more of to solve our current challenges. DLCD's approach to this work would be a great benefit to not only the agency, but the State as a whole. We humbly ask that you approve HB 5027 and support DLCD's request in this upcoming biennium.

Sincerely,

Barton Robison, Interim Executive Director  
Willamette Partnership  
robison@willamettepartnership.org