

SB 80 Testimony for Monday 3/27.

COMMISSIONER POPE:

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, Members of the Committee. My name is Craig Pope and I am a Commissioner in Polk County and Co-Chair of the Natural Resources Steering Committee for the Association of Oregon Counties.

I am here today to address this committee regarding the -2 amendment for SB 80.

AOC has continually engaged in the development of comprehensive wildfire policies for many sessions. We recognize the need for thoughtful, effective, and regionally tailored solutions to wildfire mitigation, suppression, and recovery. We are ready to do that again with the counties role found in the -2 amendments to SB 80.

I am here in my capacity, both as a Polk County Commissioner and as the AOC Natural Resources Co-Chair to discuss the Community Engagement piece of the -2 amendment.

We all know that the first wildfire map experienced some bumps along the way. County Commissioners and professional staff are interested in partnering with the department to fix the issues that occurred while introducing the wildfire map concept this past year. We are not interested in dwelling on the past, we want to help partner with the state to achieve the goals of reducing wildfire risk and protecting our communities. Yes, counties were frustrated at our lack of participation, however with the direct county engagement the -2 requires, we believe that the map will have an increased level of success.

I will do, and have done everything I can to avoid politicizing this map and work toward plans with a strong partnership with the state to build a tool that works for all corners of Oregon.

Thank you Mr. Chair and I welcome any questions you all might have.