

Testimonial Support for HB 3523— Wildfire Settlement Tax Subtraction

March 30, 2023

To Whom It May Concern:

Good morning! My name is Robyn Ellis. I live in the North Umpqua in Douglas County with my husband and our two children, ages 7 and 3.5 years old. I am writing in strong support for the House Bill 3523—Wildfire Settlement Tax Subtraction.

On Labor Day weekend 2020, my family fled from our family's home with 20 minutes notice and drove down the only exit road from our property as the forest burned on both sides of the road and overhead. We learned that the house my husband and his two brothers had been born and raised in, which our family had settled into as we raised our two young children, at the time ages 1 and 4 years old, along with all of our possessions—including dearly-loved stuffies, original artwork, keepsakes and heirlooms from great and great-great-grandparents, souvenirs from our travels, and my computer & hard-drive which had all the photos of the last 20 years of my life and all the precious photos of my pregnancies and the first years of my children's lives, had been burned and reduced to ash—all was unrecognizable and lost, and uninsured. We were technically renting, but were considerably more rooted into our lives on the land that my husband's parents had bought more than 40 years ago as they were starting a new family of their own. To orient you, the family land is located in what was once a densely forested rural area about 30-miles from Roseburg up the beautiful North Umpqua River. The Archie Creek wildfire leveled every single structure and crowned on 90% of the trees on their land; it completely devastated our existence there and has caused our family, along with my husband's parents and his two brothers, to find housing away from this place we call "home" while we commit to the daunting and vast undertaking of clean-up and re-building. At the time of the fire, my husband was working on the family land running an education center for sustainability and permaculture and I had a small massage therapy business up at the property as well. The fire that destroyed our home, family land and completely disrupted our way of living was the result of negligence due to the power company and we are presently engaged in a lawsuit.

The House Bill 3523—Wildfire Settlement Tax Subtraction, will help our family and all of the individuals who have suffered not only the tragedy of escaping the fire and the loss of their homes, possessions and prior existences, but the struggles of these years since the fire as we recoup and rebuild our lives, to receive all of the monetary compensation that is being hard-fought by our lawyers on our behalves. Without this bill we will be taxed on the amount we are asking to receive as reparations for the damages caused by the fire, as well as needing to pay taxes on the amount owed to our lawyers, which will be a part of our settlement's 'earnings.'

I earnestly and wholeheartedly urge you each to please vote in support for HB 3523.

Thank you very much for your consideration on this matter and for taking the time to read my testimony.

Sincerely,

Robyn Ellis