

Submitter: Casey Kulla

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and
Water

Measure: SB872

For the record, my name is Casey Kulla, and I serve as state forest policy coordinator for Oregon Wild. Since 1974, Oregon Wild's mission has been protecting Oregon's wild lands, wildlife, and waters for future generations. Thank you for the opportunity to speak in opposition to SB 872A.

Yes, I am aware that it passed the Senate unanimously. Bills can be popular and be still wasteful, duplicative and ineffective. As you know, SB 872A orders the Oregon Department of Forestry to work with federal agencies to reduce wildfire risk by participating in a list of activities that must be done in an ecologically-beneficial manner.

What you may not know: (1) ORS 526.275, the Good Neighbor Authority policy, already authorizes all of this, (2) the Department of Forestry exercises this authority every year, and (3) the Board of Forestry includes this policy in both their 2007 and the draft updated strategic plan.

The bill does include a specific addition to ORS 526.275, the call-out for lands and rural communities within the wildland urban interface. Addressing issues within the WUI are very important for wildfire risk reduction, but this bill doesn't get you there.

Finally, Board of Forestry members regularly express concern about not having enough cash from logging state forest for wildfire response and timber owners are vulnerable to increased fire protection costs. Adding to the plate of the department without including a general fund appropriation is not responsible, when the department of forestry is still on the edge of financial stability.

Thank you for your time today!