

Submitter: Matt McElligott
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure: HB4133

The current method of financing wildfire funding in the state of Oregon is not sustainable. The arbitrary tax increase of 2023 to Oregon landowners, particularly, Oregon ranchers who own 260,484 acres of pasture and timber land was devastating to this sector. The assessment increases, thought to be marginal by some, were not marginal to the hard-working ranchers of Oregon. Some ranchers experienced tax increases greater than 30% in 2023 vs 2022 due to the arbitrary fire funding assessment increase, I was one of them.

I have talked with many landowners whose assessment increase was in the tens of thousands. This tax increase was unexpected, thus unbudgeted for. Oregon ranchers cannot raise the price of their livestock or timber to pay for such increases, it just deducts from their bottom line. All Oregonians should shoulder the cost of protecting our clean air and water, not just a small segment of natural resource businesses.

I support the passage of HB 4133 if the proposed amendments are included: A flat rate that is lower than the 2023 rate on range and timber lands.

A
representative from Eastern Oregon to defend ranchers' position is placed on the board.

Any
short fall in funding shall be filled out of the general fund.