

Submitter: Charles Schnautz  
On Behalf Of: Wild fire victims  
Committee: House Committee On Revenue  
Measure: HB4007

In 1999 our newly formed family moved to Douglas County to take on a new job and establish a home in my native Oregon. It was a time of excitement and exploration for all of us. We wanted to rent a home so that we could explore the area and find what would probably be our forever home. The journey ultimately led to 194 Skyview Drive which was a unanimous choice of the three of us. It was a lovely older home with plantings of over 100 rhododendrons and azaleas around the property. We had our own forest of older trees going up the hill behind the house, providing cover for deer, elk, and a variety of birds, The views of the North Umpqua River and the forests behind it were magnificent. We were hooked!

The Archie fire changed much of this. While our home survived with only major smoke damage, our forest was mostly destroyed, our landscaping burned, our garage/shop with lots of contents a pile of melted trash, and the beautiful vistas of the river and the forests beside it mostly a picture of burnt matchsticks, Our forever home would never be the same.

We were among the lucky few who were touched by the flames but did not lose our home and its contents. Many lost everything, some were without insurance or underinsured. Most of us joined lawsuits to recoup some of our losses. After three years the suits have been settled and victims of the fires are receiving awards, diminished by the fees of attorneys and experts. It seems unfair to call these awards income and further diminish them by income tax. The monies received by us will be spent locally to build homes, buy replacement vehicles, refurnish homes and shops and otherwise try to restore our pre-fire lives. We ask that you pass HB 4007 to create this tax subtraction for wildfire settlements.

Thanking you in advance for helping to make this happen,  
Charles L. Schnautz