

**Testimony to the Joint Committee on Ways and Means
Subcommittee on Natural Resources
On HB 5010**

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Founded in 1968, the Oregon Environmental Council (OEC) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, membership-based organization. We advance equitable, innovative and collaborative solutions to Oregon's environmental challenges for today and future generations.

Oregon Environmental Council supports HB 5010.

Many Oregonians are unaware that Oregon has a department whose mission is to provide earth science information and regulation. However, this relatively unknown department plays an essential public safety role, protecting resources and providing technical data to support good resource management.

DOGAMI's Geological Survey & Services (GS&S) program addresses public safety, including providing data on earthquake hazards, tsunami lines, landslide areas, and groundwater. The program's open-source LIDAR data is available for use by the public; agencies; city, county, and regional planners as well as businesses. Supporting this program with General Fund dollars to supplement the program's traditional grant funding ensures that we all have access to the technical tools the GS&S program provides. Grant funding cannot provide the stable basis needed for a technical agency charged with informing and protecting the public from natural hazards.

The Mineral Land Regulation and Reclamation (MLRR) program issues permits for gas and oil wells, surface mining, geothermal exploration and chemical process mining, as well as overseeing the reclamation of those sites once extraction is complete. This helps to protect Oregon's environment, including fish and wildlife, from negative impacts associated with these extractive operations. In addition, some of these operations, such as aggregate mining, have the potential to impact water quality. MLRR also acts as the "agent" for Oregon Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and administers the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit #1200-A and Water Pollution Control Facilities (WPCF) General Permit #1000 at sites that have a mining permit issued by DOGAMI. Again, this agency is playing a key role in protecting Oregon's resources, including water quality. OEC supports using General Fund dollars to complete the paperless permitting program currently under development. However, once the program is successfully launched, we fully expect the permitting program to be supported by user fees, not General Fund dollars.

This department does some heavy lifting in the management of Oregon's mineral and geologic resources. They deserve our support and our thanks for their work.

OEC asks you to support HB 5010.