



Jay Trost

Commissioner

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March 12, 2025

Re: Support for HB 3366

To whom it may Concern

I am writing today to offer my strongest support for HB 3366.

This bill presents a critical opportunity to proactively address the devastating wildfire crisis that continues to impact our state. Last year, 1,956 fires scorched nearly 2 million acres, costing Oregon over \$350 million to combat. Beyond the financial toll, the loss of human life, property, and our precious natural resources—such as our salmon stocks and wildlife—has been immeasurable.

In addition to the fires themselves, we face a severe shortage of trained wildfire fighters. Last year, firefighters were imported from as far as Australia and New Zealand to assist because Oregon simply does not have enough trained personnel to combat these fires effectively.

HB 3366 will facilitate the creation of the Rogue Siskiyou Regional Wildfire Training Center (RSR) in Curry County, Oregon's first dedicated facility for training wildland wildfire fighters.

At full capacity, RSR will have the ability to graduate up to 1,500 cadets annually, making it the premier wildfire training school in the nation. Located in the rugged terrain of the Rogue Siskiyou region, it offers the ideal environment for training our nation's best wildland firefighters.

In addition to its training capabilities, RSR will serve as a wildfire command center for Southern Oregon and a base for rapid-response helicopter crews. Many fires in recent seasons could have been contained if we had the ability to deploy hand crews more quickly. RSR will also provide critical food services and shelter for both firefighters and victims of wildfires.

The RSR will also include a statewide recruitment program to attract young men and women to this vital, rewarding career. We are fortunate to be joined in this effort by Representative Evans

and his team, as RSR will be an integral part of their statewide SPARTICIS firefighting training project.

In the off-season, RSR will operate as a base for fuel reduction crews, ensuring that our firefighters remain employed year-round while strengthening the state's defense against wildfires.

Moreover, RSR's ability to defend Oregon's lives, lands, and properties could help mitigate the ongoing crisis of losing fire insurance carriers in the state. Passing HB 3366 and building the RSR will be one of the most significant, proactive steps we can take this legislative session to combat wildfires. It's also one of the most important actions we can take for the future of our families, children, grandchildren, and the long-term well-being of our beautiful state.

Thank you for your consideration and support of this crucial initiative.

Sincerely,



Jay Trost, Commissioner