



# OREGON STATE FIRE FIGHTERS COUNCIL

International Association of Fire Fighters  
AFL-CIO CLC

House Committee on Revenue  
Chair Representative Nathanson  
Vice Chair Representative Reschke  
Vice Chair Representative Walters

Madame Chair, Vice Chairs and Committee Members,

Good afternoon, for the record I'm Karl Koenig, President of the Oregon State Fire Fighters Council. We represent over 3800 fire fighters, paramedics, fire prevention and wildland personnel across the entire state of Oregon.

Our testimony today is in support of HB 3940A and the A20 amendments, with a few corrections and suggestions to adequately fund and administer Mitigation and Large fire costs within the Bill.

As a participant in the "Fire 35 Group" we developed a package approach that addressed the need for \$280 Million dollars as outlined in the Governor's Recommended Budget for Large Fire Costs and Mitigation funding. Some of those ideas are encompassed in HB 3940A and the A20 amendments. The fire fighters and our team members on the Fire 35 Group, who represent a wide variety of interests, want to clarify the direction of interest earnings to Mitigation funding not to offset Large Fire costs as is currently spelled out in the bill.

Our other consideration for the committee to consider is 100% of the Rainy day interest income is dedicated to Wildfire Funding, as advocated by the Governor and consistent with fully funding mitigation efforts and decreasing General Fund reliance on this plan. As opposed to the 20% recommended to date, which leaves the Fire 35 proposal some \$80M short of its needs for mitigation and response goals. Simply stated less is never more, whether you are speaking to prevention or response capability we cannot achieve success without adequately funding the entire package.

As one of the largest groups in the Fire 35 on the fire lines itself, having enough resources, whether that's aircraft on contract, mitigation and prevention resources and enough dollars dedicated to suppression efforts, is critical to our success for the foreseeable future. We know this is not going away and financial insufficiency in any one area is costing money not saving it. Our profession often recites "if predictable its preventable" moniker and never more appropriate than right now. The fire season begins with the Rowena and Alder Springs fires already nearing structures lost last year over the whole season in our first two fires of the season. Along with increased speed and acres consumed, an ominous sign for our state.

The remainder of the bill appropriately addresses our concerns that are the product of months of education, advocacy, and broadening of viewpoints of the Fire 35 as a team with a clear vision of taking care of all Oregonian's.

We ask the committee to pass 3940A and the A20 amendments with our suggested changes to the percentage of interest income from the rainy day fund to 100% and the technical fix of those funds going to Mitigation and Readiness.

Your fire fighters thank the committee for the hard decisions put upon you as a committee and our ability to come before you today with our recipe for success for all Oregonians as it relates to Wildfire Funding. .

Respectfully

Karl Koenig  
President  
Oregon State Fire Fighters Council

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