

Chair Kropf, members of the committee, thank you for your time. My name is Jared Wiener. I am here representing Lumen Technologies; Lumen is the parent company of CenturyLink and the backbone to the internet. I am here in support of HB 4140 with the -1 amendment.

Copper theft is an increasing problem for our company and for the general public. In the six months from June to December of 2024, there were more than 5,700 reported incidents impacting providers of intentional theft and vandalism across the country. In the first six months of 2025, the number increased to more than 9,700. Unfortunately,<sup>1</sup> as far as our company is concerned, the number of incidents in Oregon has grown at a faster rate, more than doubling from 2024 to 2025. These incidents cost our company money and pull my colleagues from important work in our communities to address urgent outages caused by theft and vandalism. More important than the impact to Lumen, these thefts leave those impacted without essential services. As the demographic that is reliant on landline phones, which is the technology most impacted, trends older and more rural, these vulnerable customers are left without the ability to call 911 and communicate with friends and family.

A critical driver of this criminal activity is the ease that stolen materials and equipment can be sold. HB 4140 is a good short-session bill and a first step to tackle telecommunication infrastructure crimes. The bill does 3 things:

- (1) Memorializes the Scrap Theft Alert System mirroring the State of Washington statutory language.
- (2) Clarifies the statutory definition to include critical broadband service infrastructure with an amendment to ORS 164.365 to ensure the definition of “utilities” encompasses the full range of essential communication services impacted by this growing wave of theft and vandalism.
- (3) Puts stricter requirements for the sale of commercial metal property and wire from which the insulation has been removed. It requires written documentation, such as a work order, proving the commercial seller is the owner or an agent authorized to sell on behalf of the owner.

And finally, the -1 amendment deletes the seller registration program at the Department of Justice that was modeled after a law in the State of Minnesota. With potential financial impact and details not resolved with the Department of Justice and the scrapyards, the industry postponed this concept.

I want to thank the bipartisan and bicameral sponsors as well as the constructive work by the scrapyards on this bill. I ask that you pass HB 4140 with the -1 amendment. Thank you.

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<sup>1</sup> “Fall 2025: Protecting the Nation’s Critical Communications Infrastructure From Theft & Vandalism” (originally published Nov 2024, updated in April and October 2025). Produced by US Telecom, The Internet & Television Association, Cellular Telecommunications Industry Association, et al.