

**REVENUE: No revenue impact**

**FISCAL: No fiscal impact**

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<b>Action:</b>	Do Pass and Be Placed on the Consent Calendar
<b>Vote:</b>	8 - 0 - 0
<b>Yeas:</b>	Boone, Esquivel, Freeman, Komp, Matthews, Riley, Weidner, Cowan
<b>Nays:</b>	0
<b>Exc.:</b>	0
<b>Prepared By:</b>	David Molina, Administrator
<b>Meeting Dates:</b>	2/12, 2/19

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**WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:** Directs state forester to serve as the Governor's authorized representative for the purpose of initiating the fire management assistance declaration process with FEMA and administering FEMA fire management assistance grants. House Bill 2166 codifies authority in statute.

**ISSUES DISCUSSED:**

- The need to streamline authority of State Forester in statute
- State Forester already performing assigned duties

**EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT:** No amendment.

**BACKGROUND:** The Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF), established in 1911, is managed by the State Forester, who in turn is appointed by the State Board of Forestry. The state forester acts on all matters pertaining to forestry, including collecting and sharing information about the conditions of Oregon's forests, protecting forestlands and conserving forest resources. Specific activities include: fire protection for 16 million acres of private, state and federal forests; regulation under the Oregon Forest Practices Act and promotion of forest stewardship; implementation of the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds; detection and control of harmful forest insect pests and forest tree diseases on 12 million acres of state and private lands; management of 780,000 acres of state-owned forestlands; operation of a 15-million-tree forest nursery; forestry assistance to Oregon's 166,000 non-industrial private woodland owners; forest resource planning, and, community and urban forestry assistance. Since 2005, the Office of Oregon Emergency Management (OEM) has been transferring management and handling of the fire management assistance grants to ODF.

Fire Management Assistance is available to state, local and tribal governments for the mitigation, management, and control of fires on publicly or privately owned forests or grasslands, which threaten such destruction as would constitute a major disaster. The fire management assistance declaration process is initiated when a state submits a request for assistance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Regional Director at the time a "threat of major disaster" exists. The entire process is accomplished on an expedited basis and a FEMA decision is rendered in a matter of hours. Currently, the Director of OEM, by statute, is the Governor's authorized representative.