



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

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February 7, 2012

Testimony to Support HB 4042 – Dash-1 Amendment

House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
The Honorable, Co-Chairs Brian Clem and Sal Esquivel
900 Court Street, Room 347
Salem, Oregon 97310

MEASURE: HB 4042
EXHIBIT: 2
2012 SPECIAL SESSION H AG & NAT RES.
DATE: 2/7/2012 PAGES: 1
SUBMITTED BY: Rex Storm

Co-Chairs Clem, Esquivel, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, I am Rex Storm, Forest Policy Manager for Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc., located in Salem, Oregon. I speak on behalf of the statewide trade group's nearly 1,000 member companies. These companies engage in a full-range of forestry contract operations, including: harvest, fire protection, reforestation, transportation, construction, resource maintenance, and forestry services. Many of these firms also own family forestlands and pay fire protection assessments and tax.

I am also interested in this bill for two added reasons: as a member of the Board of Forestry's Fire Funding Committee; and as a tree farm owner and Oregon Small Woodlands Association member.

I am here today to support HB 4042 – Dash-1, and urge you to pass the bill.

Associated Oregon Loggers supports this bill because it would proactively strengthen fire defenses that ultimately should reduce long-term fire losses and firefighting costs. We support the bill's three key improvements:

1. Establish a cooperatively vertical split in large fire costs, phased-in over 4 years between landowners and the state General Fund
2. Increase the investment in annual "Severity funding," again split between landowners and General Fund
3. Reinforce the 50/50 share-cost cooperation between landowners and General Fund, with a "plus" emphasis on the public responsibility to protect forests

Passing these three key improvements would be very consistent with the on-going work of the Board of Forestry's Fire Funding Committee, which is working to bring a more comprehensive forest fire proposal to the 2013 Legislature.

Thank you for your consideration.

AOL Testimony -- HB 4042 -- Page 1 of 1

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