



MEASURE: SB 1511
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 SUBMITTED BY: Jerry Nicolescu

To: Representative Ben Cannon, Co-Chair
 Representative Vic Gilliam, Co-Chair
 Members of House Energy, Environment, and Water Committee

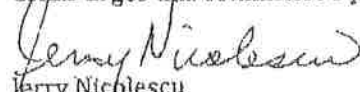
RE: House Bill 3109

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts is in support of House Bill 3109. House Bill 3109 very clearly delineates and enhances the state policy regarding ecosystem services. Further it fits the manner in which soil and water conservation districts carry out their statutory roles and responsibilities.

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) represents 46 soil and water conservation districts (SWCDs) in Oregon. The SWCDs are local governments and provide technical assistance, educational outreach and project development on the ground for natural resource conservation, watershed restoration and habitat enhancement.

Conservation districts coordinate and partner with federal and state natural resource agencies (such as the Natural Resources Conservation Service, USDA Farm Service Agency and Oregon Department of Agriculture, among many others). At the local level SWCDs partner with watershed councils, county and other local governments and volunteer groups. SWCDs leverage state and local dollars with funding from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), federal and private grants and other fund sources to implement efforts that contribute to on the ground projects. Conservation districts are not regulatory, but provide technical assistance and project funding so that landowners can voluntarily develop conservation and mitigation strategies. Ecosystem services projects planned and implemented through conservation districts are already providing added economic return to landowners exercising good stewardship, provide for local jobs at family supporting wages, increase the speed of implementation, and complement the value of other programs and strategies.

OACD urges this committee's passage and support of this important bill.


 Jerry Nicolescu
 Executive Director
 Oregon Association of Conservation Districts