

**DATE:** MARCH 6, 2017

**TO:** SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES, JOINT COMMITTEE ON WAYS & MEANS

**FROM:** ASSOCIATION OF OREGON COUNTIES

**SUBJECT:** HOUSE BILL 5011: DOGAMI MINERAL STUDY CONTINUATION

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**AOC supports continuation of the Department of Geology and Mineral Resources mineral study of eastern and southern Oregon under the 2017-19 budget**

**BACKGROUND:**

Mining has historically been a major part of Oregon's economy, and has the potential to contribute significant new employment opportunities in rural southern and eastern Oregon. House Bill 3089 (2015), directed DOGAMI to assess the mineral resource potential in those regions, and to identify further research that may increase mining employment.

DOGAMI holds a large collection of legacy mineral data. Digitizing, geo-referencing, indexing, cross referencing, and publishing this data collection in a modern geospatial database format will provide a major new source of information on Oregon mineral resources, and should encourage renewed mineral exploration in the state. The project is the most cost-effective first step for ongoing efforts to increase mining opportunities and employment, and will be among the suggested research projects included in the HB 3089 report. The completed database will be freely available to the public online.

**REQUEST:**

The purpose of DOGAMI cost estimates for the 2017-19 biennium under HB 3089 is to expand access to mineral resource information by digitizing paper maps, reports, and documents and publishing them in modern, easy-to-navigate formats. Resources needed to meet the estimate include: 2.0 FTE limited duration Natural Resource Specialists; \$394,678 General Funds; and payment of other costs, such as federal overhead, publication staff, and temporary student staff. Total needed = approximately \$635,000.

This investment and others needed to reach the point of actual mining will pay for themselves several-fold, not only in areas of the state badly in need of a major economic boost, but also statewide with new tax revenues.