



## Board of County Commissioners

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Tammy Baney  
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Philip Henderson

April 4, 2017

The Honorable Michael Dembrow, Chair  
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
900 Court St. NE, S-407  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Senator Dembrow and Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources:

The Deschutes County Board of Commissioners strongly supports the proposed legislation outlined in SB 634 which adds woody biomass to the list of green energy-generating technology to be included in constructing, reconstructing, or renovating public buildings.

As you likely know, most of the land mass within Deschutes County is publicly owned and managed and much of it is officially classified as forestland. You may also be aware that Deschutes County, in close collaboration with state and federal government agencies, has been very aggressive in its efforts to mitigate the risks of wildfire danger in the forestland-urban interface and in managing our natural resources to protect important assets such as water quality, rangelands, habitat, recreational opportunities, and private and public property.

The provisions outlined in SB 634 offer valuable tools to continue this work. As in previous legislative sessions, we are greatly supportive of any effort that encourages the use of woody biomass as a fuel source. Within Deschutes County, chipping is a necessary part of wildfire fuel reduction activities that take place on private, county, state, and federal lands. Consequently, a steady supply of rough, clean, wood chips is readily available. Developing a market for this resource would help to both create jobs and eliminate wasteful by-products.

SB 634 offers these and other benefits that will help all of us to better protect life and property, manage natural resources, and preserve habitat. As a result, we urge you to move this bill forward.

Sincerely,

DESCHUTES COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Tammy Baney  
Chair

Anthony DeBone  
Vice Chair

Phil Henderson  
Commissioner

c: Members of the Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources  
Senators Ted Ferrioli, Tim Knopp, and Linthicum  
Representatives Knute Buehler, John Huffman, Mike McLane, and Gene Whisnant