



April 12, 2017

Honorable Brian Clem, Chair
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
900 Court St., NE, H-478
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Representative Clem,

The information provided with resolution HJM 11 is an accurate description of the history and financial dilemma facing many of the O&C Counties today. Law Enforcement, Veteran's Services, Public and Mental Health Services in addition to critical administrative functions, have been drastically reduced and/or eliminated in several O&C Counties. In the last 12 years Douglas County work force has been reduced over 50% because of the reduction in timber receipts and we are now in the process of shutting down the county library system.

Having served in the State Legislature I realize, first hand, the financial challenges you face. I also am aware of the coming pressure on the State to backfill mandated services that many counties will simply no longer be able to provide.

BLM's current Resource Management Plan (RMP) for the O&C lands eliminates access to over 80% of the land base dedicated to the production of timber on a sustained yield basis and placed it in un-managed reserves. In addition the plan ignores, and is in direct conflict, with requirements and congressional intent of the 1937 O&C Act. The Association of O&C Counties has filed a complaint challenging the new RMP. That action, combined with this resolution from the State Legislature, is a strong message to the Administration that a workable solution based on sustained yield management on the O&C land needs to be found. Sustained yield management on the O&C lands can provide for the economic stability of O&C Counties, recovery of endangered species, provide clean water and fish habitat as well as recreation opportunities.

The resolution we are asking you to support is an important step in our effort to reverse the negative financial and social impacts being felt by so many Oregonians today. I appreciate the opportunity to testify on this critical issue. Thank you for your time and consideration of this important legislation.

Sincerely,

Tim Freeman
Douglas County Commissioner
President, Association of O&C Counties
www.OandC.org