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**Subject:** SB 5519 - Oregon Department of Forestry budget  
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Dear members of the joint Ways and Means Natural Resources subcommittee,

First, I would like to thank you for providing an extra public hearing on the Department of Forestry's budget. There is obviously a great deal of public and landowner interest in this budget.

Second, I would urge you to fully restore the cuts to both the Fire Program and Private Forests Program that were made in the Governor's Recommended Budget. Those cuts would result in the loss of 33 seasonal fire fighters in Fire Protection and approximately 19 positions in the Private Forests Program. At a time of increasing wildfire potential, a reduction in the fire fighting forces, particularly in initial attack, would be a very risky move. And on the Private Forests Program side, the Board of Forestry is in the process of implementing new rules for bald eagle protection and a set of complicated new rules for salmon, steelhead and bull trout streams in western Oregon. This would be a very bad time to lay off ODF Stewardship Foresters, whose job it will be to help landowners abide by these new Forest Practices Act rules.

Finally, thank you for considering my recommendation.

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