



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc. • P.O. Box 12339, Salem, OR 97309  
503/364-1330 • fax 503/364-0836 • email: rstorm@oregonloggers.org

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April 18, 2017

### **Testimony Concerning SB 5519 – ODF Budget**

Joint Committee on Ways & Means--Subcommittee on Natural Resources  
The Honorable Lew Frederick and Brad Witt, Co-Chairs  
900 Court St. NE, Room H-178; Salem, Oregon 97301

Co-Chairs Frederick and Witt, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, I am Rex Storm, Forest Policy Manager for Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc., located in Salem, Oregon. I speak on behalf of the statewide trade group's 1,000 member companies. These companies engage in forest contract operations, including: forest harvest, transportation, construction, reforestation, maintenance, protection, and allied forestry services.

**I am here today to express our concern for SB 5519, regarding the Oregon Dept. of Forestry's 2017-19 budget.**

#### Oppose Reductions in Core Dept. of Forestry Programs: Fire and Private Forests

Funding and staffing cuts to Fire Protection and Private Forests programs are very disappointing, considering these are essential programs, for which General Fund dollars draw matching private sector dollars. Our association—and the forest contract sector—works closely with the Department's stewardship foresters and fire managers to assure that the contract forestry businesses maintain one of the most effective cooperative public-private stewardship forestry programs in the nation. These important programs are strongly supported by the forest sector—and as such we oppose their proposed cuts.

#### Supportive, with structural improvements, of POP 381 – Federal Forest Restoration Program

- Previously, AOL submitted a joint comment letter on the FFRP program from: American Forest Resource Council; Associated Oregon Loggers; Oregon Forest & Industries Council; Oregon Small Woodlands Association; Healthy Forests, Healthy Communities.
- We are supportive of the FFRP program's goal to increase the pace and scale of active forest management on federal forests in Oregon. However, we believe the program requires structural improvements to ensure it is accountable and financially viable.
- Improve POP to ensure FFRP investments do not undermine the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) mission or priorities sales. While laudable, the FFRP during a "cuts scenario" budget crisis necessarily comes at the expense of essential core ODF functions [Fire and Private Forests] and private sector matching funds.
- Prioritize investments in Good Neighbor Authority projects—a first priority for the FFRP.
- Invest in State-Federal Partnership to create "additionality". Limited state dollars should be invested in federal projects that create additional sawlog economic contributions.
- Establish clear metrics before making FFRP permanent. State investments should not be used to fill federal funding "gaps" or replace Federal funding responsibilities.

Thank you for your consideration.