

Co-Chair Taylor, Co-Chair Reardon, Members of the Committee

My name is John O’Keeffe, I ranch in Sage Grouse country in Adel, Oregon, I serve as the Landowner Representative on the Sage Con Partnership, I serve on the Lakeview ODFW Sage Grouse Local Implementation Team, I serve as President of the Warner Valley Rangeland Fire Protection Association.

Oregon’s effort to manage Sage Grouse and to avert a listing under the Endangered Species Act is a monumental effort that has been pointed to a model across the west. Many partners at all levels, local, state, regional, and national have come together to make this happen.

Local Implementation Teams (LITs) are a key part of transferring this huge effort to the ground in the most efficient, prioritized, technically effective, practically effective, landowner accepted, manner possible.

To effectively manage Sage Grouse population dynamics, decisions have to be made at the population scale. Decisions have to be made in coordination with landowners, with agency land managers, in coordination with the local communities, with input from those agencies and institutions that bring forward the science and funding opportunities that are constantly changing. In light of this, if we did not have the LIT process, we would have to invent it.

It is important that we don’t look at the 2015 decision by the USFWS Service not to list Sage Grouse as an ending point, we must look at this as the point where we stopped saying what we were going to do, and started to do what we said.

Oregon’s Sage Grouse players did not sit idly by waiting for the state to fund LITs, OWEB focused investment addressed the Baker LIT, Intermountain West Joint Venture coordinated funding from BLM and ODFW to address the Prineville and Vale LITs, this ask is for the legislature to complete the process and provide \$200,000 to fund the Lakeview and Burns LITs.

Please amend HB 5510 to add an additional \$200,000 to support the Local Implementation Teams in Lakeview and Burns.

Also, I would ask that you support Sage Con by supporting HB 5027 and support the Rangeland Fire Protection Associations by supporting HB 5019.

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