

HB 2234 STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

House Committee On Veterans and Emergency Management

Prepared By: Cassie Passon, Counsel

Meeting Dates: 2/9

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Directs Director of Department of Consumer and Business Services to consult with State Fire Marshall and prescribe appropriate specialty codes standards, safeguards and guidelines for incorporating fire prevention and fireproofing or fire resistance measures into construction, repair, renovation, rehabilitation, retrofitting or maintenance of buildings and other structures that are located in areas of Oregon that are subject to or susceptible to wildfires. Requires standards, safeguards and guidelines apply to both commercial and residential buildings and structures. Directs State Fire Marshall to work with Director to identify areas in which standards, safeguards and guidelines should be applied to. Directs Director to require, by rule, that owners of buildings and structures located in areas susceptible to wildfires to obtain and maintain a fire insurance policy for building or structure that provides a level of coverage that would enable owner to rebuild or replace building or structure. Allows reconstruction or rebuilding of buildings and structures significantly damaged or destroyed by fire in an area that was subject to a wildfire between August 1, 2020, and November 30, 2020. Declares an emergency, effective on passage.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

Oregon's 2020 fire season saw over 2000 fires with 1,221,324 acres burned which is close to double the 10-year average for acres burned. Four thousand twenty one homes were destroyed and 14 more damaged in Labor Day fires alone. The fires caused 500,000 Oregonians to be under one of three evacuation levels, with 40,000 having to evacuate from their homes. By December of 2020, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) had approved close to \$31 million in disaster assistance for homeowners and renters.

House Bill 2234 Directs the Director of the Department of Consumer and Business Services to create appropriate specialty codes standards, safeguards and guidelines for incorporating fire prevention and fireproofing or fire resistance measures into the construction, repair, renovation, rehabilitation, retrofitting or maintenance of buildings and other structures that are located in areas of Oregon that are susceptible to wildfires; it also requires the owners of such buildings and structures obtain and maintain a fire insurance policy with a level of coverage that would allow the owner to rebuild or replace building or structure. The bill also allows the owners of buildings and structures significantly damaged or destroyed by fire in an area that was subject to a wildfire between August 1, 2020, and November 30, 2020 to rebuild or reconstruct their building or structure within three years of the building being destroyed.