



PORTLAND BUREAU OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Ted Wheeler, Mayor • Mike Myers, Director

9911 SE Bush Street, Portland, OR, 97266-2562

(503) 823-4375 • Fax (503) 823-3903 • TDD (503) 823-3947

February 3, 2021

Joint Committee on Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 5010

Dear Co-Chair Taylor, Co-Chair Reardon and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to speak with you this morning on behalf of the City of Portland. I am entering this letter into the record in support of my verbal testimony.

I was delighted to hear your willingness to work to preserve DOGAMI as an independent scientific agency. The City of Portland relies on DOGAMI's reliable, detailed, unbiased data about geologic risks to inform our natural hazard planning and policymaking.

A recent incident emphasized to me DOGAMI's importance in emergency management. Three weeks ago, the Portland Bureau of Emergency Management provided mutual aid to support evacuations of the Dodson area in Multnomah County, following several landslides. We issued evacuation notices and activated the Emergency Alert System. Although the landslide occurred at night, and the evacuations were carried out in the dark, without the ability to evaluate the extent of the slide, we were able to activate emergency alerts based on landslide risk areas that were mapped ahead of time, from DOGAMI's Open-File Report O-17-03 *Landslide Inventory of Eastern Multnomah County*. These maps were issued in 2017, after the Eagle Creek Fire, precisely to help inform landslide planning. They made all the difference on 4 AM on a dark, wet day in January.

DOGAMI programs, particularly the LiDAR and seismic and landslide mapping, are also vital to the work the Portland Water Bureau does in providing clean water to nearly one million people. For example, DOGAMI staff used LIDAR to map historic landslides in the Bull Run watershed and help the Water Bureau identify locations of higher vulnerability to future landslides. DOGAMI's LiDAR program also allows for integrated analysis and assessment across landscapes. Rather than looking at one project site or area in isolation, DOGAMI's stewardship of regional and state databases permits us to put sites in the



PORTLAND BUREAU OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

Ted Wheeler, Mayor • Mike Myers, Director

9911 SE Bush Street, Portland, OR, 97266-2562

(503) 823-4375 • Fax (503) 823-3903 • TDD (503) 823-3947

context of risk for the region or state. Understanding relative risk is important when choosing between imperfect options or setting policy that will apply in many different locations.

Given recent landslides, the wildfires which will only exacerbate these risks, and the huge seismic risk we still face, DOGAMI is more vital than ever. On behalf of the City of Portland, I urge you to continue your work to retain DOGAMI as an independent agency and restore important positions that have been lost, including scientific staff, outreach, and publications. DOGAMI has recently lost several senior scientists. And the outreach and communication staff at DOGAMI help local jurisdictions access and apply the data DOGAMI scientists produce. We also ask that you seek to provide DOGAMI funding that will permit the agency to have greater stability and allow scientific staff to focus on scientific work rather than on grant writing and reporting.

Sincerely,

Jonna Papaefthimiou

Planning, Policy, and Community Programs Manager