

Thank you, representatives Marsh, Dembrow, Helm, Reardon, Frederick, and Golden for sponsoring this bill. Our family, along with our neighbors, have an interest in using prescribed fire as both a land management and restoration practice on our small farms. We are stewards of acreage that includes both upland prairie and oak woodland on the fringe of the Willamette Valley, areas of which span property lines - this land supports not just our farm, but also a number of rare and threatened species that we are actively working to help protect and encourage. When we purchased our farm, it was overrun by invasive vegetation that reduced the value of the land for agriculture, wildlife, and recreation - our family has been gaining experience with safe, carefully-timed, low-intensity prescribed burns for controlling invasive plants and restoring habitat on the farm. We have found prescribed burning to be a great aid in controlling invasive plants and encouraging the growth of fire-adapted natives that are better able to compete with them. We've had neighbors express interest in pooling labor and resources to jointly burn acreage on both sides of the property line, but the rules as they currently stand make that difficult. I support this bill, and would be excited to see landowners supported in their efforts to renew the use of this traditional land management practice. I've signed up to give verbal testimony today as well, but I understand the time is very limited, and my work schedule may prevent me from phoning in. I look forward to seeing this bill advance, and would ask our legislators to give it their full support.