

May 5, 2021

Re: SB605A

Senator Lew Fredrick,

Thank you for your sponsorship and support in working on this crucial bill in support of the Rural Fire Districts.

I'd also like to thank the Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildlife Recovery.

Today, I am writing to you in response to some of the statements made during the bill's hearing in the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources.

During yesterday's hearing, there were several statements made that there are already existing mechanisms available to annex properties into the fire districts' coverage. The way that it is understood is that the fire districts have to depend on the County's Commissioners to help by means of 1. a ballot procedure, 2. to use a two-step annexation by the property owner with the approval of the commissioners and the planning department. All of the above have been attempted. Unfortunately, the current and previous County Commissioners have refused to assist in the above processes. In the last two years, only about five to seven properties have been approved for processing for annexation by the Commissioners.

The DCFD #2 has been considering a ballot measure as the Commissioners have urged the DCFD #2 to undertake this. This would be a huge financial burden (approximately \$500,000.00) if the Fire District was to undertake this action as in addition to funding an effective campaign, the Fire District would be responsible for the costs of the election as well. We do not have this money.

Regarding a ballot measure, it has been mentioned several times that Douglas County has had a ballot measure regarding the Fire District for annexation.

These statements are false and incorrect.

I've worked with the Douglas County Clerk's Office to find any such measure, who has also reached out to the Secretary of State's Office and have verified that there is no such record of this ever having been voted on in any election any time on the record.

I would urge this Committee to vote for the Bill in its current form, and I note that we have worked on several versions to work with all the parties involved.

If we all do support our Firefighters and Rural Fire Districts throughout the State of Oregon, then we should truly support this Bill without further delay.

Thank you

Guadalupe R. Preciado-McAlister

DCFD #2 Board of Directors – Director and Secretary