

Jay Wilson  
Portland, Oregon

January 28, 2021

Dear Members of the Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural Resources,

The Oregon Department of Geology and Mineral Industries (DOGAMI) is a vital contributor to this state's welfare and safety and should not be dismantled for any short-term pressures or political positioning. This state agency has remained a critical participant over decades in developing cutting edge science and embracing new technologies for analysis of natural hazards and risk identification for floods, landslides, earthquakes, tsunami inundations and the general advancing of hazard mitigation practices.

During the almost twenty years I have been a professional emergency manager in Oregon, DOGAMI has delivered necessary and challenging information to local governments and communities on the threats they face to give them meaningful and actionable tools to help local officials make hard decisions around land use planning, zoning, and development that have lasting impacts to their security and feasibility.

DOGAMI's work is held in high regard in the National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP), the National Earthquake Hazard Reduction Program (NEHRP), the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and with committed partners like the Cascadia Regional Earthquake Workgroup (CREW) and the Western States Seismic Safety Policy Council (WSSPC).

This small science-based state agency has utilized and leveraged limited general funds and impermanent federal grant funds to generate studies, maps, reports, and community engagement activities that bring neighborhoods, cities and regions together to address common risks and plan for coordinated safety measures.

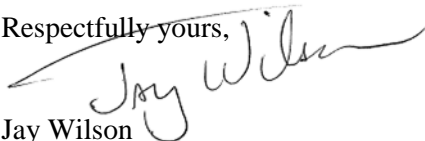
Other state agencies like the Oregon Office of Emergency Management, the Department Land Conservation and Development, and the Department of Transportation have relied on DOGAMI's data, analysis, findings, and products to deliver their respective missions on behalf of the people of Oregon and their safety and welfare.

Dismantling this agency and shuttling the few remaining positions into other agencies without a clear accounting of the integration of DOGAMI's authority and responsibilities into their new agencies. This cut and paste approach will create a disruption of critical public services to local communities and likely permanently diminish Oregon's management of its hazard identification and risk assessment process as pressures rise due to population increases, climate change-related vulnerabilities increase, and the public's trust in government services is in question.

I urge this Joint Committee to allow DOGAMI to continue as a stand-alone state agency, with reasonable and firm fiscal oversight and accountability, to help them restore their ability to administer their own programs and demonstrate good-faith recovery toward a stable and solvent workforce and public service establishment.

Please, allow this agency and its dedicated staff to continue their charge to identify the hard truths that communities may not want to hear but must address for their safety and welfare and the overall security of Oregon's people, economy, and environment.

Respectfully yours,



Jay Wilson  
Past Chair, Oregon Seismic Safety Policy Advisory Commission  
Former Resilience Fellow, National Institute of Standards and Technology  
Current: Resilience Coordinator, Clackamas County