



February 8, 2022

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery

RE: SB 1534 Increasing Carbon Sequestration on Oregon's Natural & Working Lands

Chair Golden and Senate Natural Resources and Wildfire Response Committee Members:

My name is Jan Lee and I'm the Executive Director of the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts. There are 45 conservation districts that cover all of Oregon, mostly countywide, local governments with public elected officials. The main mission of districts is to provide technical services to landowners and managers within the district to carry out conservation projects on the ground.

SB 1534 sets up a state framework for sequestration and resilience on natural and working lands, creating a voluntary stewardship program with no mandates and establishes a state policy to advance carbon sequestration, storage, and resiliency.

Our association, like many others, worked with the Global Warming Commission for almost two years as the proposal for the state framework proceeded to completion. Many of our members participated in surveys and input. This bill focuses on the recommendations from that proposal.

I would also like to point out that you have received a letter from a coalition that we are also a member of, a [letter](#) of support from many associations, ranchers, county commissioners and others in support of this bill.

There is also a letter of support on the record signed [by 27 farmers and ranchers](#) and another from [12 forestland owners/managers](#) demonstrating their broad support..

Carbon sequestration is just one more conservation tool to better manage our natural resources to assure they remain abundant and resilient while maintaining our economy.

Why is this important to the 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the state?

- Districts provide technical services to landowners and managers
- Landowners and managers are requesting help to build resiliency and carbon sequestration practices from district technicians

- Districts have tools, practices and sometimes equipment to assist constituents with these practices
- Districts often have grants or loans to fund projects and can assistance with permitting
- Or Districts can help their landowners to secure funds through partnerships with NRCS, ODA, OWEB and other agencies.

Carbon sequestration also has many co-benefits:

- produces healthier soils which can produce more crops, retain moisture, and improve water quality
- provides an opportunity to increase producers' net earnings over time through regenerative agriculture, sequestration, and resiliency techniques
- provides healthier forests to help provide cleaner drinking water, habitat for fish and wildlife and protection from wildfire
- encourages coastal areas and wetlands to sequester "blue" carbon as they filter water, provide habitat, and protect from floods.

We urge your support of this bill. It needs to be enacted now so we can get to work and make this happen after two years of commitment to the process.

Jan Lee

OREGON ASSOCIATION OF CONSERVATION DISTRICTS