

**NATHAN SOLTZ**  
**CHIEF OF STAFF**

to the

MAJORITY WHIP  
STATE SENATOR  
LEW FREDERICK



**OREGON STATE SENATE**  
**900 COURT STREET ST NE**  
**SALEM, OREGON 97301**

February 23, 2022

House Committee on Revenue

**RE: SB 1582 A – Rural Fire Protection Districts (RFPDs)**

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Pham, Vice-Chair Reschke and members of the committee,

As Senator Frederick's chief of staff, I am proud to have been deeply involved in the creation of SB 1582 A and last session's SB 605 A to support rural fire protection districts. I am the staff policy lead on this bill and have become very familiar over the last couple of years with this issue that our RFPDs are facing. I have put in countless dozens of hours on this matter. I have been referenced in testimony by both proponents and opponents several times and I appreciate the recognition, but I want to be clear: this is a bill being powered by rural fire protection districts. They identified the problem and they created a solution. My role and the role of Senator Frederick's office is to help them with the legislative language and process that helps them fix this problem.

We recognize that Senator Frederick does not have any RFPDs in his district. I was born and raised in Medford and while there are many RFPDs in my area, I was not in an RFPD either. The idea for this bill came to me from Douglas County Fire District #2 Board Director Guadalupe Preciado-McAlister. Lupe and I have worked together on volunteer work before and she knew that I worked for Senator Frederick. After her RFPD had been trying to find ways to solve this problem for years and hearing from her colleagues in other RFPDs that they were too with hardly any success, she came to the legislature for help, which is exactly what we are here to do – help. This is exactly why I love working in the legislature – I get to help.

Senator Frederick has said for many years that he feels strongly about listening to rural communities and communities outside of his district and far away from the Metro area. He speaks with great fondness of his time in every county of our state, as do I. When Jackson County experienced its horrific fires in 2020, he came down and stayed with my family for a week to see the damage and speak with members of my community. The idea for this bill came shortly after the fires and it was a motivating factor in us pursuing this fix so energetically.

I have been working in the legislature since 2016. My first session was with Senator Dr. Alan Bates. I have been in Senator Frederick's office every session since his first in the Senate in 2017. I worked for Senator Jeff Golden for an interim back home. Of all the legislation I have had the honor of working on, including a bill to honor my late father about a parking issue affecting folks with disabilities, there has been no bill I have worked on so closely and felt so certainly is immediately needed and has been so solidly crafted as SB 1582 A. I strongly believe that this is the best way to fix this problem right now. And this well-detailed problem needs to be fixed right now.

I am always readily available to discuss this bill with anyone and respond to any concerns. The support from RFPD Directors, Chiefs and Fire Fighters has been overwhelming and solidifies my sincere belief that this is a good bill and the right thing to do. I urge your support of SB 1582 A.

Very sincerely,

Nathan Soltz  
Chief of Staff  
Senator Lew Frederick