



Steve Corbató | Executive Director
corbato@linkoregon.org
503-998-3957

February 28, 2022

Senator Fred Girod and Representative Paul Holvey
Co-Chairs, Subcommittee on Capital Construction
Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: Support for HB 5202, Section 411 to enhance Oregon's ALERTWildfire camera system

Dear Co-Chairs Girod and Holvey,

On behalf of Link Oregon, I am pleased to write in support the provision in HB 5202, Section 411 for the continued development of Oregon's innovative [ALERTWildfire camera network](#). Specifically, we support the proposed \$4.5 million state appropriation to the University of Oregon to fund further installation of this system that will provide automated, early detection, alerting, and situational awareness during wildfire emergencies. Given the severity of the recent fire seasons and the increasing wildfire risk, it is critical that our detection and response capabilities be improved in Oregon to address this threat.

I serve as executive director of Link Oregon, the Oregon non-profit organization established by Oregon's four largest research universities (OHSU, Oregon State University, Portland State University, and the University of Oregon) and the Enterprise Information Services unit within the State of Oregon. We operate a statewide, facilities-based, middle-mile network serving the public and non-profit sectors in Oregon, including public service initiatives such as the Oregon Hazards Lab (OHAZ) at the University of Oregon. OHAZ operates Oregon's ALERTWildfire networks in the state as well as the closely related seismic warning system, ShakeAlert.

Since our founding in 2019, Link Oregon has worked closely with Dr. Douglas Toomey and his OHAZ team. In fact, the design of Link Oregon's network backbone in eastern and southern Oregon included provisions to enhance access by the ALERTWildfire network to improve data transfer speed and resilience. The Oregon initiative is part of a larger Western States program that deploys cutting edge tools for situational awareness and fire detection that emergency responders can rely on to improve response time and effectiveness. Of the nearly 800 cameras currently operational through the regional ALERTWildfire system, California now has 300 high-quality cameras currently operational; Oregon has just twenty.

Having a robust system of high quality, directional cameras will dramatically improve fire mitigation speed and accuracy in Oregon. It will interoperate with the OR-Alert system and share dynamic data with other local, regional, state, and federal emergency service providers. In addition, the public-facing features will allow residents – in times of danger – to access real-time and time-lapse views from each camera, permitting them to make earlier, more informed decisions on risk and evacuation routes, translating to saved lives, livestock, and property.

Link Oregon fully endorses the work of ALERTWildfire and its request for camera system enhancement funding this session in HB 5202, Section 411. We thank you for the opportunity to provide input and for supporting programs that keep Oregon better informed, more responsive, and safer for its residents and visitors.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Corbató". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a distinct flourish at the end.

Steven Corbató
Executive Director

Cc: Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Prof. Douglas Toomey