



# Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

PO Box 12339 • Salem, Oregon 97309-0339 • (503) 364-1330 • Fax (503) 364-0836

January 25, 2023

The Honorable Pam Marsh, Chair  
House Committee on Climate, Energy, and Environment  
Oregon State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: HB 2985

Chair Marsh, Co-Vice Chairs B. Levy and E. Levy and Committee Members:

Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL) is Oregon's state forest operator trade association which represents nearly 1000 forest contracting businesses. Our members have been involved in the management of Oregon's forests for generations and conduct many of the prescribed burning operations across the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the voice of nearly 22,000 hard working Oregonians who rely on access to affordable insurance and liability coverage to conduct their critical work in the beautiful forests in our state.

AOL is supportive of efforts to increase the pace and scale of prescribed burning in Oregon and our members are willing and able to make significant strides in this direction. There is funding available to do the work on federal lands from the BIL and IRA as well as efforts through Oregon Department of Forestry to help train Certified Burn Managers through the new program of the same name. Unfortunately, the private sector is struggling to obtain adequate insurance coverage at affordable rates to carry out this necessary work. The Certified Burn Manager program will help to provide additional coverage to individuals working for a private business carrying out this work which, we believe, will result in reduced risk to private insurers and result in more affordable rates.

The new Prescribed Fire Liability Pilot Program and its Prescribed Fire Claims Fund (Fund) could also add necessary padding to encourage insurers to reduce costs for entities conducting prescribed burning. This Fund should not be in lieu of obtaining other liability or broad form coverage. Instead, the Prescribed Fire Liability Pilot Program should be working with the private insurance sector to reduce rates and make insurance more accessible.

AOL is a member of the Oregon Proscribed Fire Council, sat on the Certified Burn Manager Program RAC and engages with the Oregon Department of Forestry and the US Forest Service to advance opportunities to expand the use of fire in the forested landscape.

We are working on amendment language with bill sponsors to ensure private businesses are eligible for payouts from the Prescribed Fire Claims Fund and to address our concerns lined out in this testimony. If you would like to coordinate with us to ensure this program is as helpful as possible, please feel free to reach out to myself or our contract lobbyist Kevin Campbell with the Victory Group.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on our views of HB 2985.

Graciously,

Amanda Sullivan-Astor (she/her/hers)  
AOL, Forest Policy Manager  
Office: 503.364.1330  
Email: [aastor@oregonloggers.org](mailto:aastor@oregonloggers.org)