

**Testimony Submitted by
Chris Coughlin, Policy Director
Oregon Consumer Justice
To the Senate Committee on Labor and Business**

April 18, 2023

Regarding: Support for HB 2982A

Chair Taylor, Vice-Chair Bonham, and Members of the Committee,

For the record, my name is Chris Coughlin, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify on behalf of Oregon Consumer Justice today in support of HB 2982A.

Oregon Consumer Justice (OCJ) organizes, advocates, and supports litigation to advance a justice movement that puts people first, ensuring all have the freedom to thrive and equitably share in our abundance of resources. For too long, flawed systems and economic policies that favor profits over people have stood in the way of this reality, with communities of color most often experiencing the most significant harm. Strengthened through responsive and reciprocal community relationships, OCJ is building a future where financial and business transactions can be relied upon as safe and where all Oregonians know and have recourse to exercise their consumer rights.

Oregonians who lose everything because of a natural disaster have to manage so much, both emotionally and financially. Unfortunately, consumers working with their insurance provider after a natural disaster

often face confusing and onerous requirements and significant time delays to get payment. They deserve transparent and timely support from the insurance companies who hold their policies and to whom they have often paid premiums for years.

HB 2982A gives Oregonians rights:

- To collect 70% of their contents value, without the trauma associated with inventoring a lifetime of possessions
- To know how insurers calculate depreciation by requiring insurers disclose their methodology
- To be notified by the insurer that additional benefits may be available if the insured submits an inventory
- To receive payments from the insurer within 30 days for undisputed contents, when proof-of-loss forms are completed

We believe that HB 2982A is a very reasonable approach to find a balance between the needs of industry and consumers, and that anything lower than a 70% payout should not be considered. We understand that after the Alameda Fire some insurance companies paid out at a 75% rate, so the current bill is already lower than what some companies found to be the right rate for settlements. OCJ would support a higher percentage payout without an inventory when an Oregon consumer loses everything due to a natural disaster, but could not support going lower than the current 70% in HB 2982A.

We urge your support for HB 2982A. This legislation will make the claims process more compassionate and transparent for Oregonians who experience a total loss due to a natural disaster.

Thank you for your consideration and your service to Oregon's communities.