

March 24, 2025

Senator Kayse Jama, Chairman
Senate Committee on Rules
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: **Opposition to SB 1051-1**, Landowners Living with Beavers Grant Program

Dear Chair Jama and Members of the Committee.

We request that this letter be entered into the public record on this matter. We oppose SB 1051.

First, a little background about us. My wife and I are retired, and we own and manage about 101 acres of forestland in western Oregon near Estacada, which we have been doing for over 30 years.

We understand this bill and its amendment change the appointment authority of the State Forester from the State Board of Forestry to the Governor. It also requires the State Forester **or** the Deputy State Forester to be a practical forester familiar with western conditions and experienced in organization for the prevention of forest fire.

We oppose this bill and its amendment on the following grounds:

- Traditionally, the Governor appoints the Board of Forestry. The Board represents a diverse group of interests and thus is best qualified to select this State Forester. The Board's wide-ranging deliberations on this matter are important to retain the best qualified person for this position. Removing this responsibility to appoint a qualified individual from the Board to the Governor undermines one of the Board most important and far-ranging responsibilities.
- Shifting the State Forester to a Governor-appointed position turns it into a political position, regardless of who is in the Governor's office. This may weaken public trust in the State Forester and will lead to uncertainty, less stability and less consistency in forest policy and erode respect for ODF as an agency.
- It is extremely important to have the most senior position in the Department of Forestry be someone trained in forestry. (the current bill's language states the State Forester **or** the Deputy State Forester shall have this background). The most senior position shall be so qualified (and not their second in command) as the buck stops with the State Forester and they need to have that necessary background.
- This decision will jeopardize credibility and respect between the Department of Forestry and those who interact with it.

We believe the intent of SB 1051 is counterproductive to a highly functioning agency such as ODF and this bill should be withdrawn from consideration.

In summary, we oppose SB 1051.

Thank you.
Sincerely,



David & Mary Ann Bugni,
30265 SE Kowall Rd., Estacada, OR