



March 24, 2025

RE: SB 1051

Dear Senate Committee On Rules:

I am a consulting Certified Wildlife Biologist® and the owner of a small wildlife consulting firm. The focus of my work is to assist large and small landowners manage intentionally for wildlife. In addition, my family owns and manages forest land in Lane, Lincoln, and Benton Counties, Oregon. I have over 25 years of experience managing wildlife in forested ecosystems. I'm a Past President of the Oregon Chapter of The Wildlife Society and past Chair of the Oregon Society of American Foresters – and a current member of both. Being active in both societies allows me the opportunity to help wildlife and forestry professionals communicate and discuss common goals. My entire professional career focuses on working with landowners to promote sustainable timber harvest. Much of my work is developing and implementing biodiversity management plans for timber companies. Through this effort I work with companies who own timberlands extending throughout western Oregon.

I strongly oppose SB 1051 for the following reasons:

- **ODF needs a leader appointed by a board of diverse subject matter experts, not a political figurehead.**
 - The Board of Forestry is a seven-member citizen board comprised of individuals with on-the-ground, professional or practical experience in forestry or natural resources. They have been chosen to serve because they bring a diverse but experienced perspective to the often controversial issues that come before the board and the department.
 - They are the right people to select a state forester as they bring a broad, balanced perspective to the decision.
 - Shifting the appointment authority away from the board to the governor dramatically lowers the buy-in and confidence for the position and narrows the factors under consideration for the position.
- **This dramatically politicizes the state forester position and jeopardizes the legitimacy of the agency.**
 - Forestry is already highly politically charged in Oregon, it's not in the best interest of Oregonians to dial up the political heat any further.
 - Confidence in the ability of the Oregon Department of Forestry is at an all time low – both due to recent scandalous media coverage and due to general distrust in

government by the American public. Eliminating experts in state agencies and replacing them with political figureheads will ensure Oregonians dismiss the agency's competence.

- **It has never been more imperative that professional forestry experts be at the helm of our state's largest firefighting agency.**
 - Catastrophic wildfire is one of Oregon's most existential issues. We cannot afford to have the state's largest firefighting agency led by someone with no practical experience in firefighting or forestry.
 - How wildfire is suppressed, how we mitigate future wildfire, and how we fund wildfire suppression and mitigation are paramount right now as wildfire seasons get longer, bigger and more expensive. We already have 90 legislators and the governor's office weighing in on the issue – we don't need more politics in the mix, we need experts to advise them.
 - A large portion of ODF's mission is special operations emergency management. This requires specialized experience in forest operations and organization for the prevention of forest fires. Decisions are made in a high-pressure environment with complex and rapidly changing elements, all of which have potentially devastating outcomes for Oregonians. We need a competent expert in charge of those decisions.

In summary, I strongly oppose SB 1051. The state forester must have forestry experience and should be selected by the Board of Forestry.

Thank you

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Francesca Cafferata". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Fran Cafferata, CWB®
Owner, Cafferata Consulting, LLC
Oregon Small Woodland Owner