



## **Vote No on SB 1051**

**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.

**ODF needs a leader appointed by 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.

**SB 1051 politicizes the state forester position and jeopardizes the legitimacy of the agency.**

Forestry is already highly politically charged in Oregon, and confidence in the Oregon Department of Forestry is at an all-time low. Politicizing this position undermines confidence that decisions for the agency will be made based on long-term sound forest science and wildfire experience.

**ODF needs a steady leader who thinks and plans long term.**

ODF is increasingly in charge of long-term forest management decisions that disproportionately impact rural Oregonians. The state's habitat conservation plan will have devastating economic effects on rural communities and the department is currently in the process of additional forest management plans that threaten to decrease harvest even further. Forestry is an exercise in long-term thinking. A politically appointed position with a four-year term will favor short-sighted, political decisions, which isn't in the best interest of our forests or Oregonians who depend on them.