

March 29, 2025

Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
Oregon Legislature

RE: Concerns with SB 75 and Related Amendments

Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash, and Members of the Committee:

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) is the state's most inclusive agriculture organization, proudly representing over 6500 family farms and ranches that produce more than 220 agricultural commodities. From hops and hazelnuts to cattle, cranberries, and timber with operations spanning from just a few acres to thousands, our members utilize all farming methods including organic, conventional, regenerative, biotech, and even no-tech.

My name is Ryan Krabill and I appreciate the opportunity to provide this testimony on SB 75 and its proposed amendments, which address wildfire risk mitigation for accessory dwelling units (ADUs) and replacement dwellings in rural residential areas.

We recognize and appreciate the intent of SB 75: to balance housing flexibility with wildfire safety in rural communities. Wildfire preparedness is critical to protecting Oregon's farms, ranches, and rural infrastructure, and we support efforts to ensure that structures in high-risk areas are built with fire resilience in mind. Furthermore, SB 75 maintains local decision-making authority by allowing counties, rather than the state, to determine whether ADUs are permitted in their jurisdictions. This approach aligns with OFB's long-standing position that land use planning should be driven by local needs rather than statewide mandates. Additionally, the bill includes reasonable measures to ensure that ADUs do not negatively impact sanitation, water availability, or emergency response access, all of which are essential considerations for rural development.

However, OFB has concerns about certain provisions in the bill and amendments that could unduly restrict landowners' ability to use their property. While we support fire prevention policies, we are cautious about regulatory measures that could effectively zone productive farmland out of use. Restrictions on ADU placement, limitations on replacement dwellings, and prohibitions against subdividing parcels to separate ADUs may create unnecessary burdens for rural landowners—particularly those seeking to provide housing for family members or farm labor. Additionally, the prohibition on ADUs

being used as vacation rentals, while understandable from a land use perspective, further restricts property rights in a way that is inconsistent with the flexibility farmers need to sustain their operations.

We also note that previous versions of SB 75 required compliance with the statewide wildfire hazard map, which has been the subject of significant controversy. OFB appreciates the amendment (75-1) that removes direct reliance on the map and instead requires adherence to broader fire risk reduction standards. This change helps address concerns about the fairness and accuracy of hazard mapping while still promoting responsible wildfire mitigation efforts.

In summary, OFB supports the intent of SB 75 to improve wildfire safety while maintaining rural housing flexibility and encourages the committee to ensure that the final version of this bill balances these priorities without imposing excessive restrictions that could limit the ability of farm and ranch families to manage their land effectively. While SB 75's intent to mitigate wildfire risks is understandable, its one-size-fits-all regulations could create unintended hardships for farmers and rural landowners by failing to account for the unique realities of agricultural land use, where homes, infrastructure, and water access must be flexible to sustain operations. We encourage the consideration of further refinements that would provide necessary flexibility for agricultural operations while maintaining a strong commitment to wildfire preparedness.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. We look forward to working with the Legislature on policies that strengthen Oregon's rural communities.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryan J. Krabill', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Ryan J. Krabill
Oregon Farm Bureau