



Date: February 6, 2026
To: House Committee on Revenue
From: Mike Powers, SEIU Local 503
RE: Support for HB 4134

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Reschke, Vice-Chair Walters, Members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Powers, and I represent our Union, SEIU Local 503. Our Union represents approximately 70,000 workers living and working in every county in Oregon. We provide valuable services to our communities, doing more than 500 different jobs in the public service, including wildland firefighters, and care provider sectors.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 4134 – the “1.25% for Wildlife” proposal. There are many reasons to support this piece of legislation. For our Union, this bill represents a practical, forward-looking investment in wildfire prevention, wildland firefighters protection, community resilience, good jobs, and the long-term health of Oregon’s natural and working lands.

Wildfire Prevention and Community Resilience

Oregonians know firsthand that wildfire seasons are growing longer, more destructive, and more expensive. Communities across our state are facing higher risks to homes, infrastructure, public safety, and local economies.

HB 4134 helps address this challenge by creating dedicated, stable funding for wildfire risk reduction and community mitigation work. This includes investments in projects that:

- Reduce hazardous fuels near communities
- Restore forests and rangelands to healthier conditions
- Improve wildlife habitat while lowering fire intensity
- Support proactive, preventative work instead of expensive emergency response

Preventing catastrophic fires before they start is the most cost-effective way to protect lives and property. This proposal gives Oregon another tool in the toolbox to help move from reacting to fires to preventing them.

By funding proactive land management and mitigation, HB 4134 helps:

- Reduce extreme fire behavior
- Create safer conditions for wildland firefighters
- Decrease the number of dangerous emergency deployments
- Support long-term workforce capacity through the Oregon Conservation Corps

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Investing in prevention is one of the most meaningful ways we can protect the people who protect us.

A Timely Opportunity for Oregon Leadership

At a time when federal actions are pulling back important resources Oregon has an opportunity to step up and provide reliable, long-term funding for programs that protect our communities and natural heritage.

HB 4134 enjoys bipartisan and broad stakeholder support because it addresses multiple urgent needs with a single, practical solution.

Conclusion

HB 4134 is a smart investment that will:

- Reduce wildfire risk and protect communities
- Help improve safety for firefighters
- Create jobs and train the next generation workforce
- Protect Oregon's natural and working lands
- Strengthen our outdoor economy and tourism industry

We urge your support for HB 4134. Thank you for your time and for your commitment to Oregon's people, landscapes, and future.