



February 26, 2026

House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97701

RE: City of Bend SB 1551 A - Support

Chair Marsh and members of the Committee:

The City of Bend is moving quickly to adopt Oregon Residential Specialty Code Section R327 to establish fire-hardening standards for new residential construction, because we recognize how critical these practices are for mitigating the devastating impacts of wildfire. This is part of the Bend City Council's broader commitment to strengthening wildfire resilience. Our Council goals for the current biennium include updating and refining local codes to reflect current best practices.

SB 1551 A complements this work by removing a persistent obstacle for residents seeking to reduce wildfire risk by ensuring that HOAs cannot impede the replacement or installation of fire-hardened building materials through their CC&Rs. We consistently hear from community members who want to perform property-level wildfire mitigation efforts, but are constrained by HOA rules that limit their ability to do so. SB 1551 A directly supports these homeowners by safeguarding the opportunity to apply proven best practices.

As the City considers wider code changes, ensuring residents can upgrade existing structures with fire-resistant materials is essential to bolstering overall community preparedness. When more homes are hardened against ignition, each improvement reduces the chance of structure ignition and, collectively, decreases the risk of fire spreading from house to house.

For these reasons, the City of Bend supports SB 1551 A. The bill empowers residents, clears long-standing obstacles, and strengthens our shared wildfire-risk-reduction efforts. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'MK', representing Mayor Melanie Kebler.

Mayor Melanie Kebler, City of Bend