

2/24/2026

To:

Chair Sen. Anthony Broadman
Vice-Chair Sen. Mike McLane
Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

From: Robert and Kari Cordeniz

RE: HB 4134 -1: Support for Amendment 1 to HB 4134: Oregon Conservation Corps (OCC)

Dear Chair Nathanson and Committee Members,

I am writing in support of House Bill 4134-1, specifically the inclusion of funding for the Oregon Conservation Corps (OCC) at 0.1%. Programs supported through OCC provide critical assistance to communities working to reduce wildfire risk, improve forest and rangeland health, and protect homes, infrastructure, and wildlife habitat.

In our community, partnerships with conservation corps crews and affiliated programs have helped complete vegetation management and fuels reduction work that would otherwise have been difficult to accomplish due to limited staffing, funding, or technical capacity. These projects often address high-priority areas that directly affect community safety and landscape resilience.

When we moved into this community, we had no idea how much ongoing work it would take to maintain a safe, fire-wise property. Our home sits on 1.6 acres at 15020 Ironbark in La Pine, and like many properties in this area, it needed significant thinning to reduce wildfire risk. At the time, we simply weren't in a position to take on that level of labor ourselves, so having access to these programs made an enormous difference.

The crews treated our entire acreage, addressing some Ponderosa Pines that were too close together, but focusing primarily on the dense stands of Lodgepole Pines—beautiful trees, but highly flammable when overcrowded. They thinned them to safe distances, removed excess debris, and chipped or stacked the wood. The transformation was remarkable. Not only is our property now far safer, but the work also improved the overall health of the remaining trees and the surrounding habitat.

What stood out just as much as the results was the professionalism of the teams. Both Heart of Oregon and COIC crews were organized, hardworking, friendly, and incredibly

respectful. They approached the project with care and pride, and it was clear they understood how important this work is for families like ours.

This program doesn't just benefit individual homeowners—it strengthens the safety and resilience of the entire neighborhood. Our property is no longer a high-risk parcel that could endanger others, and that peace of mind matters deeply in a fire-prone region like Central Oregon.

Programs like this are essential for our community. They support residents who may not have the equipment, physical ability, or resources to complete this work on their own, and they help create a safer, healthier environment for everyone. We are truly grateful for the assistance and for the positive impact it has had on our home and our neighborhood.

Programs like these not only improve safety and resilience on the ground but also help develop a skilled natural resource workforce to carry out the increasing amount of wildfire mitigation and land stewardship work needed across Oregon.

Continued investment through HB 4134-1 will help ensure that communities like ours can continue to partner on meaningful projects that protect people, property, and natural resources. For these reasons, we as residents of La Pine strongly support House Bill 4134-1.

Sincerely,

Robert and Kari Cordeniz

La Pine Residents

Deschutes County