

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

From: Steve and Liska Jewell

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

Dear Chair Broadman 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.

What an answer to prayer this program has been. We own an acre+ property in Sunriver, where forest fires like to have their way in our trees. Our neighbors have been taking care of their trees and fallen trees and the growth around them. But due to finances and health issues, we have not been able to take care of those things as we should. The OCC group came out and took care of our property. I love that this organization is still in existence. My Dad was one of the original CCC workers who built our parks and Mt Hood Recreation area. It's good to see this very necessary service still effective and going strong. The workers who came were friendly, and they worked hard and now we feel proud of our property due to their challenging and hard work. I was amazed how fast and efficiently they took care of our property. We set out coffee and donuts, because we were grateful.... not thinking that they would have rather had fruit. =) Please continue to offer this service. It not only helps folks who are disabled and retired to take needed precautions for fire safety, but also their neighbors. Thanks to OCC and the folks who work well and effectively in our community.

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, **South Deschutes County Residents strongly support House Bill 4134-1.**

Sincerely,
Steve and Liska Jewell
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