



## OREGON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

June 22, 2023

Senator Tim Knopp, Senate Republican Leader  
Representative Vikki Breese-Iverson, House Republican Leader

Dear Senator Knopp and Representative Breese-Iverson,

We have heard significant concerns about the cost of landowner forest patrol assessments going into the 2023-25 biennium. These concerns must be addressed thoroughly to find an equitable solution that takes into consideration the needs of various categories of landowners and timber companies while ensuring appropriate private contribution to critical fire-fighting efforts that will benefit Oregonians and stakeholders.

In 2021, we worked to ensure appropriate funding for wildfire fighting by providing a one-time \$15 million landowner offset intended to provide a temporary offset for increases expected in the 2021-23 biennium. We are prepared to discuss additional funding for this biennium as part of a comprehensive analysis of our wildfire fighting budgets and pay structures, in recognition of the disparate impact of the cost of wildfire protection on the smallest and most vulnerable landowners.

After consulting with partners and interests closely involved with these issues, we have committed to convening a workgroup to propose revisions in the assessment and harvest tax structure to better address the cost of grazing and forest fire protection in ways that consider proportionate contributions from various stakeholders.

Please send Senator Steiner your suggestions for stakeholders who should be involved in this workgroup and will enter into this critical discussion with the intent of seeking a solution. This workgroup will provide recommendations for how to resolve this challenging issue while taking into consideration taxpayer and stakeholder dollars.

Respectfully,

Senator President Rob Wagner

Senator Elizabeth Steiner

Speaker Dan Rayfield

Representative Tawna Sanchez

Cc:

Governor Tina Kotek  
Doug Grafe, State Wildfire Programs Director  
Jim Kelly, Chair, Oregon Board of Forestry  
Cal Mukumoto, State Forester  
Chris Edwards, Oregon Forest Industries Council