



February 24, 2026
House Committee on Housing and Homelessness
Oregon Legislative Assembly

RE: Support for SB 1561

Chair Marsh and members of the committee:

On behalf of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA), we respectfully submit testimony in support of SB 1561. OSWA represents family forestland owners who manage ownerships under 5000 acres across Oregon. Our members care deeply for their land, providing wildlife habitat, clean water, recreation, and timber for Oregon's rural economy. They are also residents of these landscapes—many live on or near the forestlands they steward.

OSWA supports active management of forestlands for forest resilience, forest health, and forest products, all of which play important roles in reducing the occurrence and severity of wildfire. Unfortunately, these efforts are not always enough, and family homes are lost to wildfire. When this happens, people need help to rebuild quickly and successfully, so they can restore their lives. SB 1561 helps do this.

It is important to recognize that most homes lost in recent wildfires were located on forestlands. These are not speculative developments, they are family homes, often built decades ago, within working forests that contribute to Oregon's economy and environment. SB 1561 supports Oregonians by allowing replacement of existing dwellings while maintaining the integrity of Oregon's land use system – these homes have already been through the system. Letting families restore their homes is the equitable and the right thing to do after tragedy.

OSWA supports SB 1561 for timely recovery, accountability, and fairness for those who live and work in the woods.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work to support Oregon families rebuilding after loss.

Respectfully submitted,

Mike Cafferata
Mike Cafferata
Executive Director
Oregon Small Woodlands Association