



March 5, 2025

House Committee on Climate, Energy and Environment  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Testimony in Support of House Bill 3172

Chair Lively and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of Ashland Fire & Rescue, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 3172, which establishes the Wildfire Prepared Structure Program to fund retrofitting efforts that reduce the vulnerability of Oregon's homes and communities to wildfire. We have witnessed firsthand the devastating impacts of wildfires on homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure. This bill is an essential step toward mitigating wildfire risk and enhancing community resilience.

Wildfires are becoming more frequent and severe, posing a growing threat to both urban and rural communities across Oregon. Retrofitting homes and accessory structures with fire-resistant materials and designs is one of the most effective ways to improve survivability and reduce firefighting resource strain during major fire events. The City of Ashland is committed to supporting the construction of fire resistive homes as is evidenced through our adoption of R327.4 of the Oregon Residential Specialty Code throughout the city.

House Bill 3172 provides critical funding for:

- Retrofitting homes with ember-resistant vents, fire-resistant roofing, siding, and other proven protective measures.
- Prioritizing assistance to high-risk wildfire areas, socially vulnerable communities, and low-income residents that may not have the financial means to retrofit their homes.
- Supporting homeowners whose properties have already been damaged or destroyed by wildfires.

By allocating resources to strengthen homes against wildfire, Oregon can help reduce overall suppression costs, improve firefighter safety, and most importantly, save lives. Proactive mitigation through retrofitting is a cost-effective approach compared to post-fire recovery, and we commend the Legislature for advancing solutions that prioritize resilience and preparedness.

We urge your support for House Bill 3172. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mark Shay  
Deputy Chief – Fire Marshal

## ASHLAND FIRE & RESCUE

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