



SENATE MAJORITY OFFICE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

February 25, 2025

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Sen. Jeff Golden: Worsening Wildfires Require Comprehensive Solutions

The Ashland Democrat is calling on his fellow legislators to come together to support comprehensive policy and budget solutions to Oregon's wildfire crisis

SALEM, OR – On the heels of one of the worst wildfire seasons in state history, **Sen. Jeff Golden (D-Ashland)** is taking the lead this legislative session on assembling a comprehensive package to better prepare Oregon for wildfires and strengthening the collaboration needed to protect our state.

“We know wildfires are growing more intense, frequent, and expensive,” said Sen. Golden, chair of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire. “We have to do all we can to take the next step toward fortifying the best wildfire suppression and prevention programs possible.”

The 2024 wildfire season was by far the most expensive on record and reinforced the need for a new path forward for how Oregon prevents, prepares for, and recovers from wildfires. The Legislature’s work this session comes amid actions from the new federal administration – [including mass firings within the U.S. Forest Service](#) – that continue to upend critical services and put Oregonians at risk.

Sen. Golden’s plans include grant programs for initiatives that make communities safer; taking strides toward his goal of ensuring everyone who does what they can to reduce wildfire risk on their properties can get affordable, adequate insurance; and building upon work the Legislature has done in previous sessions to reduce wildfire risk and intensity.

“Any program that offers us a decent level of protection will cost us more, one way or another, than we’ve been used to paying,” **Sen. Golden** said. “Our job is to use taxpayer resources as effectively as we possibly can to weather the tough wildfire season to come.”

Sen. Golden has also [repeatedly](#) called for the repeal of the Wildfire Hazard Map while maintaining the aspects of Senate Bill 762 that are working well to bolster small fire districts around the state, funnel resources to communities for risk reductions activities, and expand forest thinning operations.

Sen. Golden is a member of the Oregon Wildfire Funding Workgroup, which [released its recommendations](#) for new and extended funding for wildfires in the long-term, and will be leading a bipartisan tabletop convened by **Senate President Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego)** to outline policies and short-term budget options to tackle this challenge.

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