

**BELMONT TRADING COMPANY**

PHONE: 503-252-9714 FAX: 503-254-5519

P.O. BOX 55925

PORTLAND, OREGON 97238

March 13, 2013

RE: SB578

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing regarding the proposed legislation SB578 which would create new provisions regarding the harvesting of wild mushrooms in the state of Oregon.

As someone who has been a distributor of wild mushrooms in Oregon for many years, I am very concerned about the vague nature of the proposed legislation, and I am unsure as to what the ultimate goals of such broad ranging legislation are. Furthermore, I do not understand why any effort to further regulate the wild mushroom harvest has not included an aggressive effort to involve all stakeholders, including those involved in the commercial and recreational harvesting of mushrooms. I myself was only made aware of this legislation in the past few days by others in the industry.

Quite frankly, I am shocked to see that this legislation is even being considered in light of the issues we are having at the federal level regarding timber payments. A large portion of the mushrooms that are bought commercially in this state are bought in remote areas where there are very few economic opportunities for the local populations. Businesses like mine inject quite a bit of money into these communities during harvests, even as worldwide competition and dwindling harvests make it harder and harder for our businesses to survive. To impose a tax on hard working mushroom harvesters seems to me to be patently unfair

I respectfully request that this legislation does not move forward in its current state, and I welcome the opportunity to participate in a process involving all relevant stakeholders to determine whether or not any regulation of wild mushroom harvesting is even necessary, and what the results of any proposed regulation would be on all involved.

Respectfully yours,

Peter Chelico

President, Belmont Trading Company

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