

Thank you, Chair Power, Chair Dembrow, members of the committee, my name is Brennan Garrelts and I live in Roseburg, Oregon. Thank you for taking time out of your schedule to leave Salem and visit other parts of Oregon. I'm here today to testify in opposition to HB 2020 as it is currently drafted.

I am both a professional wildland firefighter and practicing forester with 15-years of experience working in the woods and I currently serve on the Board of Directors for the Douglas Forest Protective Association in Southwest Oregon. I'm not here to disagree with you on climate change, it is real. I am very concerned with this committee's lack of discussion regarding Oregon wildfires and forestlands.

Over the past ten years, more than 2.5 million acres of forestland has burned in Oregon. When you watch news coverage of our Oregon forest going up in flames what you are really witnessing is decades of carbon sequestration and solid carbon storage turning into atmospheric carbon. Each year up to 15 million tons of carbon are emitted from wildland fire in Oregon. This is more than the annual carbon emissions of the Oregon industrial sector or agricultural sector and it is twice as much carbon as all the cars in Portland emit in one year.

Simply put passing this bill will not stop Oregon wildfires in any way.

1. Climate experts have already testified in front of this committee that this bill will do absolutely nothing to impact global carbon emissions or climate change. Our forest will get dryer and fire season will be longer.
2. Your committee has not thoroughly discussed the crux of the matter which is the stark contrast between land management and fire suppression tactics of private and state lands versus federal lands.

Between 2008 and 2017, roughly 80 percent of the acres that burned in Oregon wildfires were on U.S. Forest Service ground. Yet, the vast majority of fires starts in Oregon occurred on ODF protected lands, not federal lands. This contrast of fire starts vs. acres burned is not a function of climate change, this is a function of land and fire management tactics and objectives.

When fires start on ODF protected forests, we safely and aggressively put them out. Oregon landowners invest heavily to ensure their forest are fire resilient. Our management regime is to ensure we grow vigorous and healthy fire resilient forest that aren't overstocked or riddled with diseased fire prone trees.

As written, this bill completely ignores carbon emissions from fire or forsakes the entire forest sector. If we truly care about global emissions, we should set similar goals for emission from uncontrolled wildfires. First off, the state should find a mechanism to pressure the U.S. Forest Service to aggressively suppress their wildfires instead of polluting Oregon's air. Second, I encourage you to build incentives into this bill for landowners to reforest immediately after a wildfire so that we can quickly restore the carbon sequestration process. Finally, we should build incentives to landowners and lumber mills alike to salvage burned trees thereby capturing and storing that carbon in wood products rather than letting it slowly evaporate into atmospheric carbon.

Until we start talking about carbon emissions from unchecked wildfires in federal forests, I urge you to say no to HB 2020.

Thank you,

Brennan Garrelts

Roseburg, OR