

To: Rep. Ken Helm and Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee

Re: Support for HB 2656

Dear Committee Members,

I'm writing in support of HB 2656. As an arborist and horticulturalist, I spend a great deal of time in our forests observing their health. Oregon has some of the laxest protections of riparian areas in the west and it shows. Clear cut logging is permitted almost right up to the river and creek edges. The impacts of these polices shows in declining salmon runs and increased nutrient/soil runoff into the watershed. This increased runoff already contributes to the ever-increasing instances of blue green algae blooms which have shutdown multiple municipal water supplies in the past years. This bill is a modest effort to reduce these impacts and is a simple low impact measure that allows for a few more trees to remain at a very limited distance from the water's edge, along with a reduction in pesticide/fertilizer applications in these limited areas to try and reduce these issues. The local logging industry lobbying groups have fired up their base with misinformation akin to the "death panels" debate from a few years back. They have portrayed this as something that will "decimate" the logging industry. Nothing could be further from the truth. I urge you to ignore the rhetoric, review the bill as its written and recommend it passing at the legislature in order to curtail the ever-increasing risk to municipal water supplies.

Thank you for your service.

Respectfully,

Jon Linthwaite