



## OREGON CHAPTER SIERRA CLUB

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To: Members of the House Energy and Environment Committee

From: Rhett Lawrence, Oregon Chapter Sierra Club

Date: March 12, 2019

RE: House Bill 2656

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee: Good afternoon, my name is Rhett Lawrence and I'm the Conservation Director for the Oregon Chapter of the Sierra Club. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony to you today. On behalf of our more than 25,000 members in Oregon, I wanted to offer our support for House Bill 2656.

As an organization with a long history of working to protect Oregon's forests and waterways, we believe that HB 2656 is worthy of your support. As you know, this legislation would prohibit clearcutting, spraying of chemicals and fertilizers, and the construction of new logging roads on forestlands in areas identified as drinking water sources. Unfortunately, Oregon's current laws and regulations for the protection of forests and drinking water sources are inadequate and are seriously out of line with neighboring states. It is time to reform Oregon's laggard forest practices and HB 2656 is a positive step in that direction.

It is undeniable that clearcutting, logging roads, and application of chemical herbicides, pesticides, and fertilizers on forestlands can have major impacts on drinking water sources in our state. Last year's shutdown of the Salem drinking water system due to a toxic algae bloom is but one example of how our forest practices are impacting Oregonians' daily lives. These practices also have effects on the overall volume of drinking water supplies and those impacts are only going to become dire in the face of climate change. HB 2656 could help ensure drinking water supplies that are more resilient to climate change and less susceptible to water shortages and toxic algae blooms.

For these reasons, we strongly support House Bill 2656 and we urge this Committee to do the same. We need to bring Oregon's forest practices into the 21<sup>st</sup> century and make them more responsive to the needs of our citizens. Thank you very much for considering my comments and please let me know if I may be of further assistance to the committee.