

Dear Chair Helm,

As both professional forester For Clackamas County and timberland owner in Lincoln county, I would like to ask that you do not pass HB 2656. This wonderful State of ours has some great Forest Rules and Practices which are among the best in our Nation. The proposed restrictions first off are not based off of science but what seems to me as emotional based. Most private land owners care about their lands and the environment and follow the rules administered by the Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF). There are I am a afraid to say, a very small percentage (maybe 1/100 of one percent of the land base) that just cut trees to for the money with no regard for the environment. The ODF is working to bring even those poor sole into compliance. If this bill was passed, not only the livelihood of tens of thousands people who work in the woods for a living would be impacted but that of the landowners, counties and businesses would directly have a negative impact. Even the State revenue from timber taxes would be diminished by lower timber volumes due to elevated harvest costs prohibiting the harvest of families investment in growing trees.

Oregon is one of the best places in the world to grow trees and to put these kind of restrictions that are not warranted on these timber lands is not necessary. Please vote no on HB 2656

Thank you for your public service. I pray that you look at the interest of all of the people of this State and not that of just vocal special interest groups that are not impacted at all in the proposal they have put in front of you.

Sincerely,

Andrew Dobmeier

Please oppose HB 2656!

HB 2656 is extreme legislation that would ban active management of forestland on over a million acres in some of Oregon's most productive forestland by prohibiting harvest, road building, and application of pesticides and fertilizer in forests that serve as public drinking water sources. The bill claims these restrictions are necessary to protect water quality, which is completely false. Oregon Department of Environmental Quality data confirms the best water quality in Oregon comes from forested watersheds, including those with active management.

Oregon's forests are currently managed under some of the strictest environmental regulations in the nation, much of which is explicitly protective of water quality. Maintaining the productive use of private forests is critical to the economic and social stability of many Oregon counties and communities. Private forests sustainably produce 78% of Oregon's timber harvest, support over 100 manufacturers, and employ more than 60,000 Oregonians in family-wage jobs.

HB 2656 would remove Oregon from its position as the number one softwood lumber and plywood producer in the country, risking the shuttering of mills and the loss of thousands of family wage jobs in already vulnerable rural communities.

HB 2656 is also bad for the environment. Taking away tools to manage non-native, invasive weeds such as Scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry and Japanese knotweed, would choke out young trees, and clog forest roads and riparian areas, impacting fire protection and wildlife habitat.

All HB 2656 does is force private forests into the same non-management as federal forests, where overstocked, diseased and inaccessible landscapes have generated 80 percent of acres lost to fire over the past decade. Carbon emissions from wildfire smoke emit millions of metric tons of air pollution, are costly to rural economies, and negatively impact Oregonians' health.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in opposition to HB 2656.

Sincerely,

Andrew Dobmeier
3785 Harlan Rd
Eddyville, OR 97343
a.dobmeier@hotmail.com