

Chair Helm and members of the House Committee on Energy and Environment,

As a forester with over twenty years of experience, I am writing to ask that you swiftly reject HB 2656. It is well known that the best water quality in Oregon comes from forested watersheds, including actively managed watersheds. HB 2656 would shut down working private forests, including forests that have been family-managed for several generations. These same forests have been harvested through three or now four rotations over the last 150 years and continue to provide clean water, wildlife habitat, wood fiber, recreation and family wage jobs for rural Oregon.

HB 2656 would drastically reduce early-seral habitat, a crucial habitat type that needs to be encouraged across all forest ownerships. HB 2656 also provides almost unchecked opportunity for non-native, invasive weeds such as Scotch broom, Himalayan blackberry and Japanese knotweed to flourish, choking young trees, forest roads and riparian areas, impacting fire protection and wildlife habitat. The use of herbicides is an important tool in the toolbox of forest managers. The ability to properly manage road systems is important for access, especially for fire access.

I am one of 60,000 Oregonians who depend on the forest sector for employment. We are proud of the benefits of actively managed forests in Oregon, including clean water, wildlife habitat, recreation and wood products. I do not want wood for Oregon's residential and business construction to come from out of the country, I want it all to come from right here in Oregon.

I am proud that Oregon is the number one producer of softwood lumber and plywood in the United States.

I am proud that Oregon plants 40 million seedlings per year.

I am proud that Oregon has \$12.5 BILLION in annual sales of timber and wood products and has a \$2.9 BILLION payroll.

This bill is offensive to me because I have spent my career nurturing forests, improving fish habitat through improvements in road crossings, placing large wood in streams, and applying best management practices to maintain high water quality on actively managed, working forests.

Elected officials who support this type of legislation should be required to physically spend a day in each Oregon County that would be economically impacted by HB 2656. The urban-rural divide could not be more obvious through this type of legislation. Each person on your committee must take the time to visit with land managers, contractors, tree planters, foresters, forest management support staff and public agencies that provide public services with funding from timber harvest in rural Oregon to learn how their ideas about actively managed forests are completely misinformed by those with a very specific agenda to shut timber harvest down in the State of Oregon.

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