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to : The Committee on Energy and the Environment

Having attended the March 12th committee meeting on HB 2556 I was dismayed to see and hear all of the resistance from the majority to what is essentially fellow Oregonians' right to clean drinking water. Much of the commentary from those panelists and others who spoke against the bill was specious and self serving. A classic example was the testimony of State Forester Daugherty who defended the Oregon Forest Practices Act as strong policy but when asked by one of the Representatives about the width of spray buffers around schools in Oregon had to admit that it is only a paltry 60 feet. When further asked, Daugherty said he didn't know the school buffer width in Idaho which the Representative reminded him is half a mile.

OFPA aerial spray rules also permit spraying over non-fish bearing tributary streams. In many cases, especially on the western side of the Coast Range, these tributary streams become part of the water supply for coastal municipalities. Contrary to what the timber industry will tell you, substances like 2-4-D, one of the most popular herbicides included in the mixtures sprayed, remains volatile in surface water for up to 15 days. That's plenty of time to reach drinking water sources. Again, contrary to the timber company's rhetoric, 2-4-D has been labeled by The World Health Organization as a "possible human carcinogen". On the label it also says that 2-4-D is a health hazard to birds and is particularly toxic to fish and should not be sprayed on surface water. So much for the protections provided by the OFPA.

Finally, it seems that those opposing HB2556 don't remember that in 2016 Oregon became the first state in the Union to lose federal grant money, to the tune of 1.2 million dollars, for failure to address pollution of coastal streams. According to the Oregonian newspaper, Federal regulators from the EPA said that Oregon needed to better protect coastal streams from " logging, control runoff from old forest roads and slide-prone areas, and guard streams against aerial pesticide spraying."

PLEASE SUPPORT HB2556. Thank you.

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