



OREGON FOREST &
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March 2, 2021

The Honorable Lively, Chair
House Committee on Economic Recovery and Prosperity
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: Blue-Green Economy Task Forces - HB 2916

Representative Lively, Vice Chairs Cate and Kropf and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2916. We are encouraged that the economic viability and sustainability of natural resource sectors is important to this legislature. Environmentally sound practices driven by science that help aid in economic stability are the calling cards of the sectors identified in HB 2916. Collectively, our sectors manage millions of acres in Oregon, and our landowners sequester carbon, provide wildlife habitat, improve water quality and embrace innovative technologies. We are proud of the many individuals and companies who are researching and implementing innovative technologies and climate friendly practices throughout the forestry and agricultural sectors.

We appreciate HB 2916's desire to help enhance climate resilience in our sectors and work collaboratively on environmental issues with our sectors. However, we cannot support this concept as drafted. Specifically, we have concerns about how the proposed Task Forces would interact with existing boards, commissions and coalitions who are already pursuing similar goals, how the Task Forces would support innovation within our sectors, whether the Task Forces would impose costs on our sectors, and how the relevant natural resource agencies would fund the task force.

Additionally, we are concerned about the lack of concrete engagement of farmers, foresters and forest landowners in the Task Forces. Our sectors have not had the support from the Governor's office when appointing members to boards, committees and commissions and are often left feeling underrepresented. Because of this we are concerned that working landowners that adequately represent our sectors would not be engaged as part of the Task Forces. If this bill were to move forward, each sector should be engaged to collectively determine who the best candidates are for the given sector task forces rather than giving unilateral authority to the Governor.

We appreciate the goals and intent of HB 2916, but believe that the concept needs some additional work before moving forward. Thank you for your consideration.