

March 1, 2021

To: House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources

From: Michael Jamieson and Family

Re: Oppose HB 2357 Elimination of Oregon Forest Resources Institute

Chair Witt and Committee Members,

My name is Michael Jamieson; I'm a resident and family forest owner living in rural Washington County, in the House District of Chair Witt; retired from 29 years with Tualatin Valley Fire and Rescue as a firefighter, Lieutenant and Captain; actively involved with forestry for over 50 years, accumulating over 2800 acres of forestland since 1970; member of Oregon Small Woodlands Association; member of the Farm Bureau; and father of 3 children ages 26, 10 and 7.

In a legislative update sent out on February 25, 2021, for those in his district, Chairman Witt included information on how people could apply to be on one of the 22 Commodity Commissions overseen by the Oregon Department of Agriculture. OFRI is also a Commodity Commission, but as Oregon doesn't recognize forest products as agricultural products, it doesn't neatly fit with the others. It is time forest products receive similar treatment to other commodities planted, nurtured and harvested in Oregon. OFRI has been funded by the producers of forest products, similar to other commodity commissions. It is not OFRI's job to do anything but educate the public about how these products are grown, and the benefits the public receives from having these products grown in our State.

We, the growers, make a choice to grow these products and reasonably expect some compensation for the money we invest in our land and forests, and the work we do. Most of the land owned by our family could be used for pasture, where a financial gain could be achieved on a much shorter time frame, without near the environmental benefits that are produced by our forests.

Please do not pass this bill. Do not place a tax on only forest owners to do programs that should be paid for by all Oregon taxpayers. Only forest owners pay for OFRI, and forest owners need a "Commodity Commission" to educate our children, inform our citizens and promote our products. OFRI has done a good and balanced job.

PLEASE OPPOSE HB 2357.

Respectfully, Michael Jamieson and Family