

Good Afternoon Chair and members of the committee:

My testimony is in strong support of House Bill 2357. At this time, it is fundamentally appropriate to eliminate the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (also known as OFRI) and have its funding stream diverted to the purposes indicated in this legislation.

I am Professor Trygve Steen. I reside in Multnomah county. My background involved 12 years of post-high school education, including a Ph.D. from Yale University. I have spent over 45 years teaching courses in forest ecology and the principle of sustainability at Portland State University and have done region wide documentation of forest management on Federal, State, and private lands.

The significant set of actions HB 2357 proposes is warranted because OFRI has not met its chartered mission. Instead, it has engaged in routinely providing misinformation on behalf of business as usual by the timber industry in Oregon. It's advertising incorrectly indicates Oregon's forest regulations are strong, when in fact they are weaker than surrounding states. Its advertising in support of currently damaging forest management practices by the timber industry has gotten in the way of appropriate and needed improvements for watershed and public water source protections, to name just one important problem area.

I personally find OFRI'S actions in relation to appropriate application of new scientific knowledge to be reprehensible. My example here is an important analysis by Professor Beverly Law of Oregon State University and a number of significant co-authors. This extremely important paper was published in January of 2018 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences, a refereed journal, that is one of the most prestigious in the world. **The analysis in this paper supported the role that older forests here in the Pacific Northwest could play in mitigating climate change through effective sequestration of carbon dioxide.** Instead of applying and advancing the important insights from this paper, OFRI generated gaslighting and propaganda that actually negated the potential public and environmental benefits of this significant work. This was a fundamental betrayal of the reason OFRI was established and exemplifies the way OFRI has operated.

Thank you for developing this important legislation.
Trygve Steen, Ph.D.