

I'm writing this now in support of HB 2357 after listening to Chair Witt's March 2nd hearing on HB 2357. I was there for all of it except for as it turns out my chance to speak—booted off at exactly the wrong time by the Microsoft application you use for your meetings. (it happened earlier too but relaunching at the very end was timed out by the meeting ending.)

So I heard all the HB 2357 testimony yesterday evening. It's as if two worlds collided with completely different sets of moral and ethical values, or was it? Not really. The moral compasses are not too different at all, but the power of OFRI to control the message was overpowering last night. The little stories of the gay couple who view OFRI as their saviour, the small landowners who exemplify to the nines the urban rural divide in staunch support of what they view as their forestry lifeline, those smaller stories really won the day against the much bigger picture: the undermining of science, the intimidation of those opposing OFRI, the greenwashing and outright lies to the public, the one sided presentations of forestry "facts" like bible thumping.

All those who testified had their hearts in their hands (and one minute allowed for testimony really favors the orators and fist pounders over the more quiet and reserved—and there's no bigger Truths coming out of the passionate than the quiet thinkers. But I get it, there just isn't enough time.). Oh while I'm at it please don't buy into the argument that harvest taxes are not taxpayer dollars, that's no different from me paying property taxes and saying that's not taxpayer dollars, that's my property being taxed.

What we have with OFRI is a government supported agency that has been doing everything in its power (and that's plenty) to put its agenda above the public good that it's mandated to prioritize. What we have here is an agency sprinkling just enough money around in outreach to get ma and pa farms on their side while their bigger picture agenda as a shill for Big Timber is pursued at all costs even if that means undermining State Government itself. These small timber farms are the pawns in this climate busting game. They're actually the exploited ones but do not recognize it. We've seen this scenario play out time and time again with big industrial/fossil fuel projects here in the Northwest and around the world as small cadres of people fiercely protect the wrongdoers. Drop some cash on the Coos Bay library and build a high school running track there and you've got some passionate citizens who will support you. Actually do some outreach, biased as it is, and you'll get small farmers to support you. This plays out globally with dictatorships too. Hide your true

agenda by sprinkling largesse in the right places.

Fear and favor move the public needle. We're wired that way. But it's up to you to short circuit that wiring and get rid of OFRI. It's a cancer in the public body.

sincerely, rick rappaport