

Good morning Chair and Committee members,

I am writing today expressing my personal thoughts and not the thoughts and opinions of the Clatsop County Commission as a whole. I urge you to set aside SB 335. This topic was one of the elements of both timber and environmental initiative petitions that were clearly set aside when the Private Forest Accord was struck in February 2020. The Legislature supported that agreement by passing Senate Bill 1602 in June of 2020, and it should continue that support by not pursuing this issue while the Private Forest Accord negotiations are ongoing.

As you know, forestry is a complicated field. In my view, it would be much better if the BOF had more people with a practical understanding of the principles of forestry, not fewer. No one is claiming that the current structure has somehow overweighted timber industry representation to the extent the BOF has made any decisions or policies that are not in the public interest. With only 3 possible slots on a board of 7, any industry perspective is already in the minority. SB 335 is a solution waiting for a problem that does not exist.

I can imagine it is impossible for a Board to adequately review and vote on regulations without the benefit of on-the-ground, practical knowledge of how those regulations will impact. This is akin to a hospital board not having the input of physicians, or a farm bureau not having the input of farmers. California's statute requires their Board to not have a majority of members with a direct personal financial interest, but also requires three members to be selected from the forest products industry. Oregon's Board of Agriculture has seven of nine members who must be actively engaged in the production of agricultural commodities. Oregon Health Authority has stated that more than 4 of 9 members can be employed in a health care or related field. Teachers Standards of Practice Commission has all but 2 of the 17 members that come from the education community, including teachers, administrators, superintendents, and school board members.

The Board's seven members make pivotal decisions on management activities that are critical to the success of our rural businesses and communities. SB 335 would reduce an already minority representation from the forest products industry further widening the gap between those creating regulation and those whom the regulations will impact. In conclusion, I am asking for you to push this bill aside and maintain the current system. Or if you truly wish to improve representation, you could consider making a seat for the county beneficiaries again.

Thank you for your consideration,

Courtney Bangs  
Clatsop County Commissioner District #4  
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