

I am speaking in support of HB2379 with suggestions for improvement.

I have lived in Clatskanie in a forest land area for some 30 years. In that time I have seen huge swathes of 2nd and 3 growth mixed forests once left standing and functioning and accessible to the public, only to be clear cut and slash burned and arial sprayed with toxins that drift with the wind under new ownership by multinational corporations.

I have observed as these huge corporations deny the public access to hiking and hunting on their formerly open lands, lands that have been accessible for generations of rural folk who love the land and worked those lands, but now either are totally denied access or are required to pay exorbitant fees, if they can get "in" on the rigged bidding processes to access a permit.

These corporations were given a free ride in the 1990's when they were able to get the politicians of the time to reduce their tax responsibilities when they cut down their forests, increasing their profits. It is past time to reinstate, RESTORE their tax responsibility of these massive international corporations to our state and counties.

In addition to living in the midst of these great swaths of corporate land holdings, I have tiny woodland myself. I have kept and added to my mixed forest as a forest plan for sequestering carbon and supporting wildlife, as a personal response to global warming. Small landholders like myself are not the problem, do not have major, if any profit from our forests, and should not have taxes on those small forests, whether kept for sequestering carbon, or responsibly taking small harvests in a rational and balanced and long rotation way. To punish local and small landowners with excess taxation would be harming our rural communities even further. It is our small landowners who do our best conservation practices.

I would love to see the legislature create tax incentives for climate-smart and resource protecting forestry practices, including insisting on mixed forests, lengthening logging rotations to 80 years or more and leaving a variety of ages of trees in every logging operation, not just the one or two straggling and dying trees left pretending to stand for a shelter tree in a clear cut. Protecting our soils, water and air from toxins that harm our forest production, harm wildlife and ruin our watersheds.

Oregon's logging practices are sorely behind those of Washington and California, much to our shame and embarrassment. There are fewer and fewer jobs in logging and mill worknot because of taxes on corporations, but because of automation requiring fewer workers. Why do we not require that our state's logs be milled here in Oregon? Why do we allow short rotation cycles of obscenely short times, 20 years? Why do we allow private industrial timberland to be designated as Real Estate Investment Trusts?

Much must be improved to care for our land, our ecology, our trees. We are a wonderland. Please support and protect it, restore sanity in our taxing and forestry practices.

Thank you.

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