

I am writing to you today to encourage you to vote NO on HB 2357 that effectively reduces OFRI's budget by 2/3<sup>rd</sup>s and significantly alters its organizational mission!

I am a concerned citizen in Summerville, OR and am deeply concerned about this bill. I have lived rurally my whole life and I am saddened to see this kind of bill brought before you today. Everyone that works in this industry is a true environmentalist otherwise they would have no job to go to everyday. They love working in the forest and seeing that what they do not only brings an economic benefit to their community and the state by harvesting timber for homes we all live in, products we all use every day and they would do nothing to risk that. Why would they? They also love replanting and watching the forest grow for future generations, as it will grow back! That is the best thing about this industry, it is RENEWABLE!!!

Oregon's forest products sector is vital to the state and warrants a commodity commission. The timber industry is one of the largest industries in the state. They are the economic backbone of many rural communities, a supplier of more than 60,000 family wage jobs, and a major supporter of secondary businesses. For 30 years Oregonians have turned to the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) for facts and education about the careful management of our forests and the strict environmental laws that maintain habitat, wildlife, clean air, and water.

OFRI is funded and governed exclusively by forestry professionals and they provide education resources for more than 170,000 Oregon school children annually! They are getting the next generation out to our forests and teaching them how vital they are to our state by reimbursing schools for forestry field trip costs that enable over 25,000 students an experience that they may not otherwise get. OFRI also provides training and manuals for forest landowners to ensure our forests are sustainably managed.

Lastly, Oregon deserves sound science and reliable facts and OFRI provides this not only for Oregon school children but the population at large.

I urge you to please vote no on HB 2357.

Thank you,

Melissa Fullerton