

652 Faith Avenue  
Ashland, OR 97520

February 24, 2021

I am writing to express my opposition of HB2357. Oregon's forests are one of our State's greatest resources. And the Oregon Forest Resource Institute (OFRI) is essential in advancing forest management and forest products, increasing public understanding of forests and their use and value in our State, and supporting forest's health and sustainability through education and stewardship.

OFRI provides tours, conferences, workshops, publications and research to advance the health and sustainability of our precious forests. In addition, OFRI funds the Oregon Talk About Trees program, providing interactive, science-based, age-appropriate tree and forest curriculum statewide to Oregon's K-12 students. Facilitators return to classrooms each year to expand upon the information and knowledge student's received the previous year, and that education grows exponentially throughout their schooling. As a former preschool teacher, I found TAT's annual involvement in my classroom invaluable. The children couldn't wait for "The Tree Lady" to come each year, and I was grateful for the wealth of information shared to (and retained by) students without the worry of finding the fund (which, as you well know, is nearly impossible.)

Please do not pass HB2357. Oregon's forests depend on your support and foresight.

Thank you for your time.

Joanie Keller-Hand