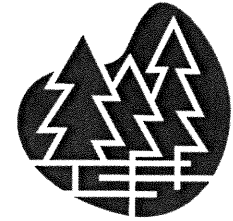


# New Meadows Tree Farm

Rex Storm • Cornelius, OR 97113 • Washington County



February 24, 2021

The Honorable Brad Witt  
Oregon House of Representatives  
State Capitol  
Salem, OR 97301      Email: <https://olis.oregonlegislature.gov/liz/2021R1/Testimony/HAGNR>

**Subject: OPPOSE HB 2430, 2389, 2379 – Forest Taxation Bills**

Dear Representative Witt:

Chair Witt, Vice Chairs Breese-Iverson and Hudson, members of the Committee, for the record my name is Rex Storm, from Cornelius, Washington County, Oregon.

**I urge the Committee's opposition to HB. 2430, 2389, and 2379.** I remain neutral on HB 2070, concurring with the position of Oregon Small Woodlands Association.

My wife and I own and actively manage 95 acres of forestland, mostly located in Columbia County—within your District 31, Representative Witt. The three proposed forest taxation bills would have a negative impact on our family's small business forest operation. I take it very personally when urban Oregonians and far-away legislators attempt to unfairly raise forestry taxes—overreaching to rob my family's years of forest stewardship investment.

Oregon's income, property, business, and forestry taxes are already high enough. The tax increase proposals would be punishing to my family and our ongoing costly investments in forest stewardship. Our business margins are just a few percent, realized after decades of expense and sweat equity. This proposed tax gerrymandering is wrong and unfair—because it would disincentivize my family's stewardship and economic contributions to Oregon's greater good. The price tag of the bills is too high. Current forest taxation is properly functioning—and more taxes would be worse for Oregon family forests.

Oregonians do not pay my family a penny for the forest ecosystem services and public benefits that we provide to them. My family takes pride in our professional forest management invested to plant, grow, thin, protect, habitat and harvest. I put my personal touch into every stewardship prescription. Through my family's labor and commitment, our private property provides abundant benefits to both public and to our family—including clean water, salmon streams, wildlife habitat, carbon capture, aesthetics, jobs, income, and wood fiber.

Our family tree farm has been a valuable contributor to Oregon's rural economy. We annually pay property tax, forest fire protection assessments, and business fees. Then, I must wait 50 years before any income can be realized. When we finally harvest, large tax bills are paid for federal and state income, plus state harvest and CAT—among the nation's highest taxes.

Thank you, Representative Witt, for your understanding of forestry. I urge your opposition to these unfair tax policies that would wrongly disrupt Oregon family forests.

Respectfully,

*Rex D. Storm*

Rex Storm, Certified Forester, Owner, New Meadows Growth LLC