

September 22, 2021

Chair Witt & Honorable Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources Members  
State Capitol. Salem, OR 97310

My family and I are small woodland owners in Douglas County. We manage our family forest sustainably by growing, harvesting, and reforesting on a renewable cycle that takes 50 years of our personal care and investment. We have always paid our fair share of state taxes, including a harvest income tax and production tax, plus 50 years of annual property taxes and forest protection assessments.

In 2000, we harvested several separate parcels totaling 550 acres of our forestland, while adhering to Oregon's strict forest protection rules. In 2001 we made a serious investment by planting and tending to over 275,000 tree seedlings, which by 2007 had established into a young thriving forest that is capturing carbon at the highest rate. Again, this investment was required by Oregon's tough laws. In 2017-18 we harvested and reforested an additional small parcel.

Both of these harvests and reforestation projects involved prescribed burning of surplus harvest fuels to prevent future wildfire hazards. We do this while protecting water, habitat, and clean air. Also, part of our family's harvest revenue was reinvested into different projects elsewhere on our forestland—other projects that aim to reduce wildfire risks, such as:

- Non-commercial thinning of overcrowded young forests
- Road rocking and other water protection improvements
- Creating permanent fire trails that reduce potential fire hazards
- Enhancing access and water sources for future firefighting efforts

All of these investments help to better protect our forestlands we cherish—and our neighbors' forests—from large uncontrollable wildfire potential.

***Unfortunately, our entire properties were burned in the Archie Creek Fire of the catastrophic fires of 2020. That's why this is the wrong time to impose new taxes on Oregonians who are struggling to recover from such devastating losses.***

As responsible land owners, we will take on the burden of restoring our land, repeating all of the above processes stated for best forest practice after these fires, with little to no income from harvest, to the cost of \$750,000 and or above. . Our methods keep forests healthy, water clean, wildlife abundant, and capturing carbon from the air in our healthy tree growth. New taxes will make this effort difficult, if not impossible.

Lastly, I want to share with you that I am deeply concerned that our federal and state forestlands are not being managed sufficiently to prevent large wildfires from spreading onto family forests like ours. I am alarmed about too many public lands having poor road access and overcrowded fuel conditions. It has been proven over and over again that these public forests are a very real hazard to all Oregonians' safety, health and emotional wellbeing. We now face having to look at millions of burned/desolate/with no wildlife/landscape polluting our air for years and years.

Rather than harming Oregonians who are working to restore and reforest their lands, the Legislature should focus on reducing the serious risks on these public forests.

Please say NO on any new Timber Tax

Thank you,

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