

Dear Representative,

I'm writing to you today to encourage you to vote NO on HB 2357, 2379 and 2598 that either de-fund the Oregon Forest Resources Institute or eliminate it all together.

I am a teacher that has personally benefited from two of OFRI's three primary programs. One of these areas is K-12 education, focusing on professional development for teachers, in-class educational programs for students, field-trip transportation reimbursement, and grade-level publications for teachers and students that correlate with state science, social science, math and literacy standards. All materials created by OFRI are free.

You may have heard of some of the education programs made possible by OFRI funding like:

- The Oregon Natural Resources Education Program at OSU that provides free professional development for natural resources education to teachers across Oregon. These classes are well developed and very informative.
- Talk About Trees, an in-class forestry education program for pre-K through eighth grades that reaches more than 100,000 students annually. My school has participated in this program for the last 9 years!
- The Rediscovery Forest at the Oregon Garden that provides K-12 students an opportunity to discover the importance of Oregon's forests, see forest management and understand how forests contribute to our quality of life. Working only a short distance from the Oregon Gardens, this is a perfect field trip for my 4th and 5th graders as they prepare for outdoor school.

Additionally, as an outdoor enthusiast and a summer time wildland firefighter, I have used OFRI to gain personal knowledge about Oregon's forests. Their public education program has provided me with research, websites, and videos covering a wide range of forest related topics, including: Oregon forest facts, water quality, wildfire, carbon, Oregon Forest Practices Act reforestation fish and wildlife protections.

For all of these reasons, I urge you to please vote NO on these detrimental bills. Oregon's schoolchildren benefit greatly from the curriculum and literacy materials that are correlated to state standards, outdoor experiences and funding provided by OFRI's K-12 education program.

Thank you,

Jessica Schmidt  
3rd Grade ESOL Teacher  
Salem Keizer School Dist.