

Dear Committee Members,

while I generally support the Severance Tax I strongly believe there is significant room for improvement.

The current proposal stipulates that in one form or the other some 75% of the revenue is to be spend on firefighting and that 25% should benefit Harvest Tax items, which basically benefit the timber industry. This distribution leaves counties at the short end as these counties are in desperate need for additional funding assistance to deal with the negative impact timber logging has on preserving and securing a clean water supply. Reference is made to the now famous OPB/Oregonian investigation published last summer.

Accordingly I would suggest a distribution as follows: 50% for fire fighting, 25% to the county in which a tree is logged to secure clean and affordable water supply and final 25% to same county as form of property tax to support the K12 education system.

Also this new Severance Tax provides a wonderful opportunity to support the fight of climate change: Accordingly, I suggest you provide for tax benefits increasing in value the higher the age of a tree when logged. Reduce the tax significantly for a tree aged 40 and 50 yrs. It takes a reforested tree up to 10 years to turn CO2 positive. 10 years added to a tree's life (i e, logging after 40 yrs of growth instead 30 yrs) adds significantly to its potential for CO2 absorption: i. e. 50% when logged after 40 yrs instead of 30 yrs or 100% if logged at age 50.

In my humble view, any tax incentive supporting the average age of a forest before logging is well invested money in our future.

Thank you for your consideration.

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