

Date: 2/25/2021

RE: Opposition to HB 2389; HB2430; (and HB 2379)

Chair and Members of the Committee:

Hello, I am Darcy Davis from Yamhill County. I am currently the co-president of the Yamhill Chapter of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association and I want to oppose HB 2389 and HB 2430 that seeks to impose severance taxes on timber harvested in Oregon.

Growing up I never remember my dad living off of the sale of timber. In fact, he worked outside jobs to purchase and maintain his forest and the equipment needed to take care of his property. He lived frugally. After my dad passed away in 2006, the family property remained largely intact but my mom agreed to sell my husband and I thirty acres in 2008.

Since purchasing our forestland we have completed three small harvests in an attempt to cull dead and dying trees. The small landowner has trouble even finding logging crews willing to work our land. The mobilization costs are too great to make it profitable for either the landowner or the logger. We split harvest costs with my mom in order to get a crew.

The money generated from the sale was used on home and property improvements with a significant portion reserved to pay for reforestation costs. We planted and then replanted, we hired a spray crew and then a crew to cut out the invasive Scotch Broom. Eventually, the trees began to grow. It is a process; an expensive and time consuming process that we are still undertaking.

I love the land and I believe the benefits of our time and resources extend beyond dollar signs. We know we are planting for some distant harvest that we will not see. Sixty years is the prediction but there are costs in between; more vegetation control, road maintenance, thinning, equipment upgrades and repair. My husband and I both work outside jobs and live a simple lifestyle in an effort to establish a healthy forest for our children and grandchildren to inherit.

The severance tax would be a hardship for timber owners. The rate is significantly higher than the current taxation method. If the tax rates were increased, it would raise the question of selling the family farm because we couldn't afford to keep it.

Please don't pass these bills that would increase taxes on an already strained budget.