

Subject: Oppose HB 2357 – OFRI Elimination Bill

Chair Witt, Vice-Chairs Breese-Iverson and Hudson and Members of the Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee,

If the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) goes away who is going to tell the science-based story of Oregon's Forests?

OFRI is dedicated to telling the story of Oregon's Forests. They do it through publications, K-12 education and media work. OFRI tells the story year around. The staff at OFRI does not go off to fight wildfires or spend their time asking for donations. The Oregon Dept. of Forestry (ODF) does some of this work but when wildfire strikes, ODF goes all in. Stewardship foresters, educators from the Tillamook Forest Center, carbon sequestration specialists, and others are all brought to the fire with roles to play. ODF has too much other work to do to provide the steady stream of forest information needed to hold people's attention in a media intense world.

OFRI is there to get Oregon ready for climate change. Action and creating forest resilience are part getting Oregon ready for climate change. New innovative solutions need to be publicized. Who had heard of mass timber construction until OFRI started sharing what they saw and how carbon could be sequestered in multi-story buildings? As climate change manifests itself on Oregon OFRI helps explain how Oregon's forests can play a role in it.

OFRI provides factual, truthful and science-based information. There are a lot of information sources about Oregon's forests and I want to hear what they have to say. When it comes time for me to evaluate these sources, I need a standard. OFRI is my standard. Decisions can always be made using emotion, political considerations, spiritual, economic and other factors but I don't want to have buyer's remorse when I make my decision. OFRI provides a bank of information that I can draw upon.

Please vote no on HB 2357 and keep OFRI.

Respectively submitted,

David Wells  
Tillamook, Oregon