

Chair and Members of the Committee

I am Jen Hamaker, Lane County

Oregon should be focusing on repairing and restoring the million acres we lost to forest fire, not increasing costs to those who are restoring our forests to health!

Private forests were hit hard: nearly 40% of the acres burned in the Labor Day fires were on private lands. We just lost over a million acres to wildfire, we're struggling to get contractors, roads built, loggers, truckers, coming up with new ways to sort logs in the log yards based on severity of burns, we're still dealing with COVID-19 practices, and other added costs.

The salvaged lumber has different degrees of burned fiber, some of it is usable, some not. Timber companies who manage their timberland will make sure to get the salvageable timber off the ground, but who knows what it is worth until they try and make lumber. The cost of salvaging timber is extensive, and the return isn't as much as it would be if it weren't burned.

There are over 65,000 small tract timberland owners in Oregon (that own 25,000 acres or less). These Bills remove small tract timberland owner's exemption from paying an ever-increasing severance tax. That means the money they will get in 40-50 years when they harvest, will have to be set aside to pay this tax which would have gone to proper forest management and keeping their timberland healthy. Just to put things in perspective, currently Forestland Values Per Acre are \$743.70/acre for harvest on timberland, and \$147.53/acre for harvest on small tract timberland. That's a 20% increase on the cost of harvesting, not to mention the severance tax increase proposed in this bill. Small tract owners may not be able to afford this steep increase and the other proposed increases in just this session alone.

This could force the timberland owners to sell their property. REITS (Real Estate Investment Trusts) could come in and swoop up their timberland for East Coast investors, or worse could create Urban Sprawl. What was once a healthy forest could become the next strip mall.

Keeping forests as forests is in the best interest of all Oregonians, and our current tax and land use systems work together to encourage forestland is maintained in Oregon and not lost to conversion like our neighboring states. Since 1907, Oregon has maintained 94% of its forestland area, whereas Washington and California have lost over 15% of theirs.

Reinstating a severance tax encourages conversion of forestland to other uses (residential, industrial, agricultural) that do not provide environmental benefits like carbon capture and storage, wildlife habitat, clean water, and recreation.

We might be broke, but Oregon's government is overflowing with our \$\$money\$\$!

Today's revenue forecast is out. Even in light of 150,000 jobs lost, state economists are predicting a Kicker at an estimated \$571 million.

These taxes are not good for Oregon or our forests!

Sincerely,
Jen Hamaker