

I want to offer testimony in favor of HB 2357, eliminating OFRI, the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, and eliminating the OFRI Fund. I am a biologist, a community leader, and an Oregonian living and recreating in a forested rural area. I am adversely impacted by poor forest management practices that ignore current science, promote erosion and even landslides in sensitive areas, and fail to protect streams for salmon and for drinking water. I have a stake in this bill, and will posit that most Oregonians do.

OFRI, the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, has been convincingly shown to function almost exclusively as a PR organization for the logging industry in Oregon, promoting timber clear-cutting, fighting against science-based forestry practices, and downplaying climate change. The fact that OFRI has pushed its agenda on the public for years via TV, billboards, and even school programs is bad enough. It has misinformed the public and promoted damage to our natural resources. The fact that this has been carried out with taxpayer funding is astonishing and shameful.

OFRI should be defunded and eliminated immediately, and its funding stream should be redirected to science-based forest management, to the benefit of all Oregonians and our environment.