



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

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January 26, 2023

The Honorable Janelle Bynum, Chair
House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: HB 2908 - **SUPPORT**

Chair Bynum, Co-Vice Chairs Morgan and Nguyen and Committee Members:

Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL) is Oregon's state forest operator trade association which represents nearly 1000 small forest contracting businesses. Our members have been involved in the management of Oregon's forests for generations and are true professionals that care deeply for the health of our forests. AOL has been serving small businesses in Oregon for over 50 years.

We are committed to rural economic development while enhancing environmental justice through balanced forest management and sustainable forestry practices. Small businesses are the backbone of any industry and the forest contractors AOL serves bring vitality and equity to local communities throughout Oregon.

To that end, AOL recently created a Workforce Development Program for our members and hired a manager to facilitate such efforts.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the voice of nearly 22,000 hard working Oregonians.

AOL is supportive of efforts to increase support of small businesses throughout the state and we have a unique relationship with the small business development centers throughout Oregon.

AOL provides a voluntary qualification through our Oregon Professional Loggers Program which keeps forest contractors up-to-date on forest regulations, science, safety and leadership skills. We are partnering with the small business development centers around the state to provide critical business and leadership education to our members.

HB 2908 could be a great opportunity to continue gains in workforce development for the forest contracting sector which allows for critical fuels mitigation and forest health activities to be maintained in our state.

Oregon's existing forest products sector and its health is imperative to the state and its objectives around climate change and wildfire mitigation and support for small businesses helps to maintain its vibrance.

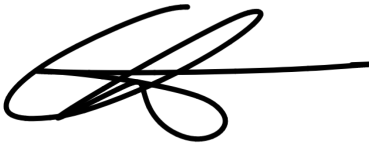
Oregon has long been a national and international leader in sustainable forest management with nearly the same amount of forestland in 2023 as in the 1600s. Oregon also leads the nation in its production of durable forest products with the highest production of softwood lumber and plywood and the most engineered wood plants in the nation.

The harvesting, transportation, manufacturing and restoration sectors that enable working forests to remain on the land help the state to be a global supplier of forest products. This value, which is only provided through the maintenance of an intact and synergistic industrial sector, is an integral component of the state's contribution to the global climate response, efforts to mitigate carbon biogenic emissions, necessity to maximize renewable building products and responsibility to rural and timber driven communities and economies.

Please consider supporting HB 2908 through a DO PASS vote to help small businesses, like the ones AOL represents, to ensure economic development continues forward for the health and wellbeing of Oregon.

If you would like to coordinate with us to ensure this program is as helpful as possible, please feel free to reach out to myself or our contract lobbyist Kevin Campbell with the Victory Group.

Graciously,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Amanda Sullivan-Astor (she/her/hers)
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