

Submitter: Rick Zenn

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and
Water

Measure: HB3019

Testimony in Opposition to HB 3019

My name is Rick Zenn. My family lives in urban east Portland. Oregon's forests and conservation are very important to us. I am testifying today as private citizen, educator, non-profit executive, and lifetime outdoor enthusiast.

I urge you to oppose HB 3019.

In 2023, HB 3019 is poorly timed, misinformed, and simply not up to the job it proposes to address.

We all face many challenges today about the future: Climate change, clean water and air, safe streets, health care, housing, workforce, public education, equity, the economy, it's a long list. Whatever the immediate priorities and projections, increasing public engagement and literacy about these complex issues is essential. Oregon's forests and the Oregon Forest Resources Institute have an important role to play in that future.

HB 3019 will do little help Oregon get where we need to go.

I have participated in hundreds of OFRI's community programs and forest tours, technical conferences, professional development workshops for educators, programs in the woods for children, and workforce programs for high school students. Over a twenty-year period, I have always found OFRI's boots-on-the-ground programs, led by dozens of partners and fantastic volunteers to be excellent. OFRI's maps, research, and publications are world class. OFRI's recent publications on green building, wildfires, and wildlife are informative and accessible. OFRI's experience convening partners and communicating directly with our state's very diverse family forest owners will be essential moving forward with implementation of Oregon's complex new forest practice rules.

The Oregon Forest Literacy Plan, one of the first in the nation, is example of OFRI convening diverse partners and leveraging scarce dollars to support teachers and schools. OFRI's leadership and support to establish future workforce and CTE programs in Oregon is part of Oregon's success story in this arena. It is widely reported that students in Oregon, living in our urban, suburban, and rural communities, have little sense that family wage jobs exist in natural resources,

forestry, and conservation. In the future, Oregon students will gain access to these diverse career pathways by acquiring essential skills, connecting to nature and forests, and gaining workforce experience in their own communities. Collaborating and working with non-profits, business, and public agencies is an essential part of the equation for schools and teachers today. I believe the Oregon Forest Resources Institute has a very important role to play in the future.

HB 3019 will do little help Oregon get where we need to go.

Please oppose HB 3019.

Thank you.

Rick Zenn