

Submitter: James Merzenich

On Behalf
Of:

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

Measure: HB3019

I am a woodland owner and currently the membership chairman for the Linn County chapter of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association. Most of our 118 members own property in the Cascade foothills below an elevation of 2000 feet. Landowners in this zone have been heavily impacted by drought mortality due to overstocked stands and a changing climate. Whether we manage our land primarily for timber or wildlife, we need to thin our forests to maintain stand health while reducing fire risk. To do this we need a viable timber industry that will purchase our saw-logs and other products. The Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) is funded by our Harvest Tax dollars. OFRI's numerous publications on wildlife and timber management and their non-partisan efforts to teach us how to manage our lands in a sustainable and ethical manner, is invaluable. I see OFRI as a critical link between us, the timber industry, and the general public. I also support OSU Extension which works hand-in hand with OFRI to assist our members. Private forest landowners already pay more than their fair share to protect lands from wildfire. Diverting funds from OFRI to Extension and the Oregon Forest Protection Fund will weaken our efforts to improve forest management on private non-industrial forest lands. I urge you to oppose HB 3019.

Jim Merzenich

Oak Basin Tree Farm

Brownsville, Oregon