

February 27, 2023

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, and Members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources

Re: Opposition to Senate Bill 795 and County Takeover of Oregon's State Forests.

Hello Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to testify. My name is Kathleen Sullivan. I am a former Clatsop County Commissioner, and served as the representative to the Forest Trust Land Advisory Committee for four years. I am speaking today in opposition to Senate Bill 795 and County Takeover of Oregon's State Forests.

The Oregon Department of Forestry's stated mission is: *To serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing, and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forest to enhance environmental, economic, and community sustainability.* ODF received lands some 80 years ago that lay in utter devastation, and brought them back to the forests we have today that produce multiple benefits for the public, which is remarkable. The Oregon courts concurred by upholding the Appeals Court ruling in the Linn County v. Oregon lawsuit.

These public forest lands belong to all the people of the great state of Oregon. The iconic Northwest Forests, in fact, attract visitors from around the world. The hospitality and recreational industries are an important source of income for our rural economies, especially on the coast.

Oregon's water demands are increasing. Our coastal forests are the vital element in our water ecosystems. ODF has managed state forests through the booms and busts throughout the decades. These professionals dedicated to caring for our forest lands have the earned experience to carry us into the future.

While revenue from state forests are used in our counties, cities, and special districts, times are changing. More diversified funding streams must be used to augment local budgets. The advent of the climate crisis, increased wildfire seasons, and rising labor costs are but a few reasons why the people of Oregon must work together to find more sustainable streams of revenue for community budgets.

Respectfully, Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod, and Members of this Committee, please put this unhappy concept of Senate Bill 795 to rest. Let's move on and find realistic and pragmatic solutions. Thank you for listening.

Kathleen Sullivan
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