

Senator Mark Meek, Chairman

Senate Revenue and Finance Committee

February 19, 2024

Mr. Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nicole Wood and I would like to submit testimony in opposition to SB 1593.

Respectfully Sirs and Mams, did you realize that SB 1593 has intention of eliminating Oregon Forest Resource Institute's (OFRI) funding? OFRI is a VITAL resource for all people interested in our Oregon forests. From diversity of trees, wildlife habitat, stream health, environmental impact, and biodiversity at all levels of the forest from below floor to above canopy. OFRI offers information, resources, and educational experiences free of charge to everyone. OFRI does not receive governmental funding. Their funding comes from the forest industry, including our Small Forest Owners (SFO).

For the betterment of the public, OFRI is currently closely coordinating with Oregon Department of Forestry (ODF) on communication to educate and explain technical details surrounding the Private Forest Accord (PFA) with SFO landowners and public.

There is no other organization engaged to do this.

Additionally, OFRI produces numerous valuable educational publications on sustainable forestry, wildlife, water, reforestation to name a few. These invaluable resources are highly used by the SFO community, but OFRI makes these available for all communities.

Sirs and Mams of the Committee, did you know OFRI is a leading source of information on wildfire prevention for rural landowners? While on this subject of wildfire. In SB 1593, Counties are not required to spend the money they receive for fire protection and State Fire Marshall receives 25% of the proceeds from the bill but they do not protect timberland. This seems a misappropriation of the intended finances. SB 1593 is a dangerous bill for OFRI, SFO's, Oregon forests, and our wildfire funding. SB 1593 furthermore would stonewall any work and effort that ODF and OFRI have been working on regarding the PFA and helping integrate the new rules with the SFO's. I ask that you vote no and stop this bill from moving forward.

Thank you for your time.

In appreciation,

Nicole Wood