

Co-Chairs Helms and Owens and members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water:

My name is Kate McMichael. I am a small woodland owner living in Vida, in Lane County. The property my wife and I purchased with our retirement savings in 2019 burned in the 2020 Holiday Farm Fire. The years since then have been an ongoing crash course in the complexities of sustainable forest management (not simply caring *about* forests, but actually being tasked with the work of caring *for* one) and the intricate dance of economic infrastructure and rural communities. We have also been witness, throughout the long fire seasons since 2020, to what happens when forests are not managed sustainably—often due to litigation challenges rooted in mischaracterization of forest management activities by anti-forestry organizations. In the years since “our” fire, the McKenzie Valley and surrounding areas have been further traumatized by ongoing wildfires each summer, largely on federal lands—the real life outcome of the fear-mongering falsities that mislead the public and legislators alike, to the detriment of all of us who love our forests.

The outcry again HB 3103 is like an Oregon version of what plays out in the federal forest arena—although this time taking aim at our beloved State forests. This is not a bill that demands clearcutting of State forests. This is not a bill that will derail the State Forest HCP process. This is not a bill that would force the Department of Forestry to log public forests recklessly and unsustainably.

Instead, this is a good governance bill that seeks transparency and follow-through on sound forest management decisions, decisions that include harvest. Sustainable is even in the short form summary of the bill, not just once but twice!

At its core, this bill is about transparency, following sound science, following through on commitments to rural communities. The mission of the Department of Forestry is to serve the people of Oregon by protecting, managing, and promoting stewardship of Oregon's forests to enhance environmental, economic, and community sustainability. This bill is about balance and transparency in the Department's work to fulfill its mission.

I hope that each of you on this Committee is savvy enough to know the difference between what this bill is actually about—and how it is being

mischaracterized by the anti forestry forces that seem bent on insuring that no acre of Oregon is unscathed by the specter of neglect and catastrophic fire.

Please support Oregon's state forests and Oregon's rural communities who rely on them for ALL of the benefits of forests. Please sustain both our state forests and our rural communities. Please support this bill.

Thank you.