

Submitter: Andrew Simrin

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Natural Resources

Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB5521

Dear Co-Chairs Frederick and Levy, and Members of the Committee:

I have lived and worked here in the southern Willamette valley for my whole life. I spend a lot of my time in the forests of Western Oregon, marveling at our dwindling old-growth trees, swimming in our streams, and hiking. I often ground truth/monitor timber harvest operations on federal, state, and private forests within Western Oregon. I'm commenting today in support of strong funding for the Private Forest Accord, SB5521. I also support a new Forest Management Plan that protects salmon, wildlife, clean water and provides carbon storage and sequestration to fight climate chaos that we are experiencing now.

I have provided testimony in support of a strong HCP to the Oregon Board of Forestry, as it is very important for many people, industry, and wildlife to have a predictable and enforceable strong management plan.

I like to visit Western Oregon forests, and plan to do so in the future, in great part due to the wildlife and hiking opportunities. These forests are important for Oregonians water supply and can help sequester more carbon while enhancing habitat for at-risk fish and wildlife.

Without a federally-approved Private Forest Accord Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) by 2027, the new rules roll back entirely to the outdated standards that failed to protect clean water and salmon habitat. Without a solid commitment to fund core conservation programs, Oregon's path to federal approval is unclear.

Please fully fund \$10 million for the SFISH grant program for small forestland owners and \$6 million for the adaptive management program to evaluate the effectiveness of the new rules in the Oregon Department of Forestry's budget (Senate Bill 5521).

Thank you.