



April 24, 2025

House Committee on Revenue

Regarding HB 3489 as amended

Dear Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Reschke and Walters, and Members of the House Committee on Revenue:

Climate Reality Project, Portland Chapter, urges your YES vote on HB 3489 with amendments. We are an organization committed to just solutions for the climate crisis. Oregon's forests provide recreation, watershed protection, wildlife habitat, effective protections against climate change, and opportunities to share and learn about the benefits of our natural world. In past years, they also provided a long-standing source of revenue and an economic base for many rural Oregon Counties. As large timber companies have grown and incorporated, they have failed to pay their share of protecting Oregon's timber communities from devastating wildfires, fires that burn longer, hotter, leaving increased destruction in their wake, heartbreak and havoc for rural Oregonians, and increased expenses to Oregon's taxpayers due to increased drought. It is past time for the largest timber companies operating in Oregon, companies making hundreds of millions in profit, to pay the costs of protecting their assets. Oregonians and small woodland owners are picking up most of the tab.

In the 1990s, the timber severance tax was discontinued and the revenue collected from harvest taxes has been greatly diminished for the last two decades. HB 3489, as amended, will:

- **Make big timber companies pay their fair share for forest protection.** Currently, the largest timber companies in Oregon are paying a fraction of the cost to protect their private land from wildfires, despite making hundreds of

millions in profit. Oregonians and small woodland owners are picking up much of the tab.

- **Ensure future funding for wildfire suppression.** Oregon is experiencing more frequent and devastating wildfires that are costing taxpayers millions. In 2024 alone, fighting wildfires in Oregon cost approximately \$350 million.
- **Fund state programs that help prevent wildfires.** One third of the revenue from the policy will go towards the Oregon State Fire Marshal for community wildfire prevention and resilience.
- **Support increased revenue for Oregon's timber counties.** One third of the revenue will be reserved for unrestricted use for counties where timber is harvested.

HB 3489 as amended is long overdue. This bill is a new severance tax *on the REITS* not small woodland owners and not Oregonians. It is fair and just. Those who own this private land and reap vast income from those resources will pay their share of the costs of protecting it. The income will fund the Oregon State Fire Marshal for community wildfire prevention and resilience. It will also provide unrestricted income for counties where the timber is harvested.

Thank you for your service and for protecting Oregon's resources and communities.

Sincerely,

Karen Harrington  
Climate Reality Portland  
Member, CR Portland's Legislative Committee

#### About the Climate Reality Project Portland Chapter

The Climate Reality Project (CRP) Portland Chapter is a local, volunteer-led chapter of The Climate Reality Project, an international nonprofit of 5 million members led by climate leader and former US Vice President Al Gore, whose mission is to catalyze global solutions to the climate crisis. Our legislative committee bases its advocacy on CRP's 5 pillars: a just transition to clean energy, zero carbon transportation, climate justice and public health, green communities, and a fair, representative democracy. [climaterealitypdx.com/](https://climaterealitypdx.com/).