

Submitter: Robert Wright
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3489

I am a lifelong Oregon resident, born in Portland in 1943. The timber industry has been a part of my life from the beginning, as it provided the livelihoods of great grandparents, grandparents and uncles. I went on to enjoy a 50+ year career as a CPA and financial manager. All of this informs my testimony in support of reinstating the timber severance tax.

Whatever the rationale was years ago for eliminating the timber severance tax, I have watched as many, if not most, of the timber communities in our state have suffered as a result.

Currently the majority of private timberland in Oregon is not owned by the people who live here. The owners often pay no local or state taxes, so they are not contributing to the costs of the infrastructure that benefits them. Nor do they live in and contribute to the communities, as owners did in years past. Meaning that those costs are paid by the people of Oregon, which is patently unfair, and difficult to do without the revenue that came from the timber severance tax in the past.

For those forestland owners who do live in Oregon and thus pay income taxes here, the bill protects them by providing for a full 100% nonrefundable tax credit on their timber income. That tax credit provision is critical in my view to protect local people from double taxation.

As for how the tax revenues would be spent, the majority would go to cover the cost of fighting wildfires and building community resilience to help local people manage in the face of this increasing wildfire threat. The remaining portion will go to the timberland counties to be used as they see fit.

The severance tax will be simpler and easier to administer, reducing state expenditures.

This bill provides for a public vote, which would allow Oregon citizens to decide if they are ready to correct what now looks like a mistake made years ago.

Please refer this bill out of committee with a do-pass recommendation. Thank you.

Sent from my iPad

On Apr 23, 2025, at 5:37?PM, Catherine Thomasson <thomassonct@gmail.com> wrote:

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Thanks Bob! Attached is my testimony.

I asked for clarification about TIMO's. They are "management" companies for the baseline group which can be a private corporation or a REIT. They will be taxed and if not paying corporate taxes in the state will not get the corporate tax credit.

Catherine Thomasson
503-819-1170

On Wed, Apr 23, 2025 at 3:41?PM Bob <gbobw1943@comcast.net> wrote:
Hi Catherine,

I am in Eugene, and would like to help advance this bill if I can, so I would like to see your testimony to help me draft written testimony.

Also, I can contact my representative, Lisa Fragala, to encourage her support. Do you have talking points you can send me for that?

Bob Wright

Sent from my iPhone

On Apr 23, 2025, at 11:22?AM, Catherine Thomasson <thomassonct@gmail.com> wrote:

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Hi folks:

We desperately need more support for this tax bill especially from folks outside of Portland, but don't let that stop you as we're all impacted by wildfire. The hearing is tomorrow at 3pm and testimony can be submitted up until 3pm on Saturday.

We need your help to support HB 3489, which will reinstate the timber severance tax in Oregon and support wildfire protection and prevention.

Millions of acres of Oregon's forestland are privately owned by Wall Street under Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), which allow those forest owners to pay little in corporate income taxes. For too long, Oregonians and small woodland forest owners have been paying a disproportionate share to protect public and private forestland. Reinstating the timber severance tax is a fair solution for all Oregonians. Oregon is experiencing hotter and drier weather, with wildfires that are more expensive and damaging than ever before. In 2024, wildfire suppression (AKA firefighting) cost taxpayers \$350 million. Private forest owners benefit greatly from publi