

Submitter:

Tania Ewing

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

HB3940

I understand perfectly the need to find sustainable funds for Oregon's wildfire defense, however I oppose HB 3940 if it includes changes to Oregon's Bottle Bill. This bill takes the wrong approach by undermining one of Oregon's most successful environmental programs.

The Bottle Bill has worked for more than 50 years – keeping litter out of our natural spaces and helping Oregonians recycle more than 2 billion beverage containers each year. It also supports widely used programs like BottleDrop Give, which nonprofits use to raise millions of dollars each year, and the Green Bag program, used by more than 1.1 million Oregonians to save for college, cover daily expenses and support their favorite nonprofits. If the BottleDrop recycling program goes people will no longer collect bottles and cans. Those very bottles and cans are going to become litter and attract other litter - that would not be such a good representation for the tourism industry that brings in many dollars to Oregon.

The changes put forth in HB 3940 puts all of that at risk. While wildfire management is critical, the causes of wildfire have no nexus to our Bottle Bill. The quest to find sustainable funding for wildfire management shouldn't come at the cost of dismantling a proven environmental success story and system that Oregonians trust and value.

Instead of taking away something that works and works well, why not add a small tax to the timber or utility companies - yes they are important to Oregon, but Oregon is important for them and it is only fair they should step up and help out with contributing to wildfire management. It is time to bring back a tax on timber harvests, which I believe was discontinued in the 1990s, and direct the tax proceeds to a wildfire defense prevention fund.

Please vote NO on HB 3940 if it includes any changes to the Bottle Bill. Let's protect this legacy – not break it.

Thank you.