

Testimony in Opposition to HB 3489

Submitted by Isabelle Lafferty

Eugene, Oregon

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My name is Isabelle Lafferty and I am submitting this testimony on behalf of myself and my family as small woodland owners in Oregon. I am writing in strong opposition to HB 3489.

As stewards of a family forest, we take great pride in managing our land responsibly, sustainably, and with care for future generations. HB 3489 poses several serious concerns for us and other small forest landowners across the state.

First, this bill proposes to increase severance taxes on timber harvests. For families like mine, who are not large industrial landowners, this added financial burden could discourage responsible harvesting and forest management. We already face high costs related to replanting, wildfire preparedness, and ongoing stewardship. Additional taxation would only make it more difficult to maintain healthy, productive forests.

Second, HB 3489 would eliminate the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI). OFRI is one of our most valuable resources for learning best practices in forest care and management. It provides education, research, and outreach that directly benefits small landowners like us. Removing OFRI would take away a critical support system at a time when we need more resources to address wildfire risk and climate resilience, not fewer.

Finally, this bill creates an uneven playing field by offering tax incentives only to lands certified under the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), excluding those certified by the American Tree Farm System (ATFS). Many Oregon Small Woodlands Association (OSWA) members, like my family, are certified through ATFS—a credible, nationally recognized system that promotes sustainable forestry. It is unfair and counterproductive to reward one certification over another when both meet high standards for responsible forest management.

I urge you to reconsider HB 3489 and its potential impact on Oregon's small woodland owners. We are your neighbors, land stewards, and part of the solution to creating a healthier, more resilient landscape. This bill punishes responsible forest management instead of supporting it.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective.

Sincerely,

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