



Service Employees  
International Union  
Local 503

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To: House Committee on Revenue  
From: Mike Powers, SEIU Local 503  
RE: Support for HB 3489-1 proposed  
Date: April 24, 2025

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Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chair Reschke, Vice-Chair Walters, Members of the Committee:

My name is Mike Powers, and I write on behalf of SEIU Local 503, our union representing over 70,000 working Oregonians in every county of the state. Our members -- public employees and care providers -- are on the front lines of community resilience and wildfire response. We support HB 3489 -1 as proposed.

For years, large timber corporations have avoided paying their fair share toward the cost of protecting Oregon's forests, even as wildfire suppression costs have skyrocketed. The Oregon Department of Forestry is responsible for nearly sixteen million acres, yet timber companies contribute only a small fraction of the resources needed to safeguard them.

HB 3489-1 as proposed provides a long-overdue fix. It reinstates the timber severance tax with a fair and targeted approach:

- A 5% tax on timber harvests above 25,000 board feet per year, protecting small landowners;
- A full credit against the private severance tax for timber income taxes paid;
- Preservation of the public severance tax;
- Even revenue distribution between timber counties, the Oregon Department of Forestry, and the State Fire Marshal to fund fire prevention and mitigation.

Today, it is reported that large out-of-state investment firms, such as Real Estate Investment Trusts, or REITs, own at least 40% of Oregon's private forestland. As their Oregon profits and tax benefits flow out of state, HB 3489-1 ensures that those gaining the most from our natural resources reinvest in our communities and wildfire readiness.

We commend the bill's balanced structure. It supports rural economies, reinforces wildfire defenses, and ensures fairness by linking tax revenue to the value extracted from Oregon's forests -- without burdening family-owned woodlots.

In short, HB 3489-1 is a fair, necessary, and future-focused policy. We urge your support.

Thank you.