

Chair Nathanson, vice chairs Reschke and Walters, and members of the committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to offer written testimony in opposition to HB 3489.

My name is Theresa Hausser and my wife and I own and manage 39 acres of woodland in Vida. It was burned in the Holiday Farm fire, 18 months after we purchased it. The fire necessitated a crash course in forest and forest products infrastructure, which has led to frequent testimony on legislation affecting said infrastructure—sadly, usually in opposition to bills that seem designed to punish elements of the sector rather than improve public policy.

This is at least the third time we have offered written testimony in opposition to a severance tax, a tax which also manages to destroy OFRI. Since we have only been in Oregon since 2019, this is alarming from a policy perspective (who has what axe to grind?). Yet we again take time away from our post-fire invasive plant management so that we can write testimony to prevent the even more deleterious effects of bad legislation.

Harvesting trees and subsequent reforestation are not the same as non-renewable extractive industries like mining, and as such a severance tax on timber is inappropriate.

The allocation of tax monies in HB 3489 undermines current wildland firefighting infrastructure and the ongoing, broadly-based work of the Wildfire 35. The allocation also eliminates funding for OFRI. I have previously spoken and written at length about the irreplaceable value of OFRI to small woodland owners. Suffice to say that without OFRI, the burden placed on the remaining organizations in the Partnership for Forestry Education would be crippling, and landowners would be bereft of readily accessible science-based information. Is that the goal of HB 3489?

While HB 3489 is written to appear to favor smaller landowners over larger landowners, small woodland owners will be adversely affected. The increase in taxes, and that the tax structure would encourage shorter timber harvest rotations, has been well documented in other testimonies. I will focus on the bizarre exclusive preference given to FSC certification, which I submit belies any assertions that HB 3489 favors smaller landowners over larger (industrial) landowners. The American Tree Farm System, of which the Oregon Tree Farm System is a part, is a free-to-landowners third party verification that a land is being managed in accordance with international sustainability standards. It is the ONLY free certification system available to small landowners. FSC certification is just not practicable for small landowners, as we discovered when we explored that option for our woodland.

When we purchased our property, we thought we had at least 15 or so years before we had to consider a harvest. The Holiday Farm fire changed everything. The crash course we've undertaken in woodland/timber infrastructure has taught us that everything is connected (and not just in the beautiful, mystical way of Jane Hirshfield and John Muir)—and we are all seeing, on a national and international scale, just how connected

everything is. Please do not let this re-introduced piece of legislation damage small woodland owners, the wood products infrastructure, and firefighting funding. Please do not allow a narrow focus on damaging one industry damage countless sectors of our state. Please do not move HB 3489 forward.

Thank you for your consideration.

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