

April 16, 2025

House Committee On Revenue

Re: Oppose HB 3489

Chair Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Rep. Werner Reschke, Rep. Jules Walters and members of the committee,

My name is Mike Barsotti. I'm a family forest landowner, a forester for 50 years, an Oregon Department of Forestry retiree and a member of Oregon Small Woodlands Association and the Oregon Tree Farm System.

I'm opposed to this bill for several reasons which include:

I'm opposed to this bill for 5 reasons:

1. **This bill puts the burden of paying for wildfire suppression on the backs of the forest sector, and the majority of the tax goes to non wildfire suppression programs.** I was a member of an advisory committee to a 2020 legislative directed Fire Suppression Cost Study, HB 4304 Section 69, that found that Oregon forestland owners pay the highest percentage of fire suppression costs among the 12 Western States.
2. **Forest landowners are not the major source of wildfires.** What is needed is a fair, equitable funding method. This session's HB 3940 addresses wildfire suppression funding in a more fair, all Oregonians approach. The committee developing HB 3940 rejected the use of a severance tax as it is not an "all Oregonians" approach.
3. **Oregon's forest sector already pays more than 1.5 times in taxes than other similar Oregon business sectors.**
4. **This bill favors one forest certification system over others.** The state should not be in the business of favoring one system over other legitimate certification systems.
5. **For many landowner state income taxes are far less than this bill will take from a harvest.**
6. **Landowners are paid on pond value, not stumpage values, and many thinning harvests provide little net income.**

**Please reject this bill.**