

Submitter: Steve Vaught
On Behalf Of: self
Committee: House Committee On Revenue
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3489

I strongly oppose this measure because it: (1) was developed in a rushed process with last minute changes that many following the legislation were not aware of [as noted during the public hearing]; (2) increases taxes on a struggling forestry sector that is already heavily regulated and taxed; (3) will be a significant disincentive for non-industrial forest owners to continue maintaining their forests; and (4) is biased and discriminatory by carving out a special incentive for only one particular forest certification entity.

Major tax legislation cannot be rushed and changed on the fly with little notice to affected communities. Oregon has had multiple mills close recently; do we really want to continue to lose our forestry infrastructure? This broad brush tax will hit smaller forest owners disproportionately; if REIT's are not paying their fair share of taxes, craft targeted legislation to correct that. Finally, creating an exclusive incentive for only one of the three internationally recognized forest certification entities is very troubling; it suggests that the legislation is heavily influenced by a special interest group. For that reason alone, this legislation needs much more work and public input.