

**Testimony in Support of SB 485 - 2**  
**Submitted to the Senate Committee on Finance and Revenue**  
**May 6, 2025**

Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Boquist, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of SB 485 - 2. My name is Isabelle Lafferty, and I am a small woodland owner in Oregon. I write today to respectfully urge your support for this important bill.

Continuity of land ownership is essential to good forest stewardship. As a small woodland owner, I have made long-term investments in my forest that provide many benefits—not only to me and my family, but to the broader public. Healthy forests support wildlife, provide clean water, store carbon, and produce renewable wood products. These outcomes are only possible when landowners can plan and care for their forests over the course of decades, even generations.

Unfortunately, Oregon's current inheritance tax structure often disrupts this continuity. When a landowner dies, their heirs are frequently forced to harvest timber early or sell forestland just to pay estate taxes. This pressure can lead to fragmentation or conversion of forestland, undermining years of careful stewardship and diminishing public benefits.

In 2023, the Legislature took an important step to address this issue. However, the language in that bill has proven difficult to apply effectively to forestlands. SB 485 - 2 is a thoughtful and necessary fix. It provides the clarity and fairness needed for small woodland owners like myself to pass land on to the next generation without sacrificing long-term stewardship goals.

Forest landowners are not asking for special treatment—we're asking for policy that recognizes and supports the public value of sustainable forest management. SB 485 - 2 does just that, and I strongly encourage you to support it.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Isabelle Lafferty  
Small Woodland Owner  
Eugene, Oregon