

Submitter:

Annabelle Morgan

On Behalf Of:

Committee:

House Committee On Revenue

Measure, Appointment or Topic:

SB485

Dear Chair Narhanson, and Members of House Committee on Finance and Revenue:

My name is Annabelle Morgan and I am writing in support of SB 485 A. This bill recognizes the need to clarify the present \$15 million estate tax exemption for Oregonians owning forest properties so that families can actually access this as it replaces the 75% of working days rule of SB 498 with active forest management requirements which aligns more appropriately with the decades and sustainable management practices needed to create a healthy forest and environment for fish and wildlife. I live in Beaverton but jointly own agriculture and forestlands in Lincoln County with my brother. As a 3rd generation Oregonian, my family has always been involved in agriculture and forest management activities. A World War II Veteran, my father returned from the war and was involved in the logging industry, driving truck, logging, and working in mills established after the war. Before my mom and he married, he was able to buy some property on which he raised cattle, and eventually logged while working his other jobs. The sale of the timber and property enabled them to buy acreage from one of his uncles close to where he grew up on the Alsea River. Again, working outside jobs, they raised cattle and waited decades until the forestlands that had been cut grew without replanting, just natural succession, to harvestable size. He was able to do some logging upon retirement until having to hire this done, following best management practices, doing site prep, replanting and protecting the seedlings with each tree being dipped in Plantkyd and staked and tubed to deter elk and deer browsing, trapping Mountain Boomers, maintaining roads, combatting invasive species, doing PCT, etc. to promote the best environment for forest growth. He was Lincoln County Tree Farmer of the Year three years, American Tree Farm System (ATF) Certified, and instilled his passion for the forests in his grandchildren at an early age as they handed off stakes and tubing to protect seedlings he was planting, and later as they went annually to measure the tree diameters where he had done some PCT. At the time of his death, there was no natural resource exemption for our land, and we were only able to keep the land because he had some money in investments which we had to use in order to pay the inheritance taxes. Without this, we most likely would have had to try to sell the farm or take out loans to pay the estate taxes within the 9 months required for this. Just as the roots of his seedlings became entrenched in the soil, nourishing the seedlings he planted, my brother's and my roots along with those of our children grew strongly attached to our land. Our parents' hope was that the family farm would continue as such. We have tried to continue his legacy and goal, following all the rules and regulations and management practices to maintain a healthy, sustainable forest not just for our family but for all Oregonians. We want to honor our parents' wishes and pass the land to our descendants. We believe that creating separate qualification

requirements for forestland inheritance taxes per SB 485 A, will make it possible to have the property remain as a family forest instead of our children having to sell the property to someone who lacks love for our property and maintaining the healthiest forest possible upon our death. Thank you for the time, energy and long hours you devote to considering this and other bills. I hope you will vote to support SB 485 A.