

Submitter: Megan Holmes

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4105

Dear Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice Chair McDonald, and Members of the Committee,

I oppose House Bill 4105. This timber industry bill prioritizes logging over all other forest values on state forests. It undermines the state forest Habitat Conservation Plan and would lead to more clearcuts, more industry lawsuits, less habitat for fish and wildlife, and less carbon storage on state public forests. Trees are the only thing that actually cool our planet, and cutting our forests directly effects local temperatures and water quality. The evapotranspiration of forests creates low pressure zones that actually pull maritime moisture inland, and the hydroscopic microorganisms released into the atmosphere by trees form more than 50% of the condensation nuclei for clouds. Yes, our forests actually attract and create rain! Trees shade the earth preventing the absorption of the suns rays, and their roots guide rain into the ground, replenishing aquifers rivers and streams. This cycle is called the biotic pump and is the way that water and heat is circulated on our planet.

This bill is bad for the state of Oregon. The Department of Forestry already has processes in place to establish timber harvest goals and regularly meets or exceeds those goals, often at the expense of water quality, imperiled species, and the cooling of the planet. Cutting more trees will mean LESS water for the trees that are left, making our forests more vulnerable to drought and fire.

The bill is expensive, and puts the state of Oregon at risk. It would require costly rulemaking and lead to non-stop litigation the state would have to defend against at taxpayer expense. The bill creates a new, special right for the timber industry to sue the Department of Forestry to force more logging on state forests. The state can't afford unneeded legislation with an enormous fiscal impact.

I urge you to oppose this bill. Instead, I encourage this committee to focus on measures that would increase forest coverage and RESPONSIBLE harvesting of our forests. Areas should be logged in small patches or strips in a manner where mature trees can shade the bare ground, preventing hot spots and erosion. Leaving groves of mature, and healthy trees to shade the ground in small patches can help snow pack last longer into the spring, hydrating the ground and making our forests more fire proof. I don't see responsible harvesting happening on any hillsides! On the contrary, I see clear cuts so bad that it is ruining entire watersheds. The recent clearcuts along 101, left narrow strips of spindly trees that newly exposed to the

ocean breezes, that easily blow across the highway! Irresponsible logging practices have made our coast highway dangerous to drive, hurting tourism and putting lives in danger! In contrast, the state should be able to sue private landowners for the irresponsible clear cuts that disrupt water quality, create erosion and endanger public safety.

Please don't let this bill pass out of committee. We can put Oregonians to work planting trees and should be able to sue private landowners for harming the public safety and the climate that our children and grandchildren will inherit. Thank you,

Megan Holmes