

Dear Co-Chairs, Helm, and Owens, and Members of the committee,

I oppose House Bill 4105 and its amendments. This timber industry bill undermines the state forest habitat conservation plan and would result in more clear cuts, more lawsuits, less habitat for salmon and wildlife, and less carbon storage.

As someone who was born in Oregon, and have lived here all but a handful of years of my life, I have witnessed and experienced our forests firsthand for seven decades. My father worked in the timber industry after retiring from the Navy, and when I finished high school in Elmira, Oregon, I went to work in the mill to earn money to become the first college graduate in my family. I grew up spending time in the forests of southern Oregon and later the Willamette Valley and Oregon coast.

While living and working in Tillamook County, I learned how our rural communities depend on the forest for their water supplies. I led the implementation of the largest grant funded program ever awarded to Tillamook Bay Community College from the US Dept. of Labor, in 2000, for the express purpose of training existing residents working in the timber and fisheries industries to learn new skills, to become electronics technicians in the growing fields which were beginning to play prominent roles in the infrastructures and workforces of the local economies of the county. The college applied for and was awarded this grant, in recognition that continuing to harvest timber and fish at those unchecked levels was not sustainable. Communities were beginning to recognize this and needed to adapt and find new ways to sustain themselves.

As Oregonians we support natural resource protection over logging, as recent polling by the Oregon Forest Resources Council shows Oregonians value clean air, clean water and wildlife habitat over logging. This is backed up by polling conducted in 2022 by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center showing strong support for resource protection on state forests.

Ongoing and increasing reports of water supply and contamination issues have been surfacing over the past few years, as this life giving resource to 500,000+ Oregonians is threatened by logging practices. Oregon also has the unique distinction of being home to six salmon stronghold rivers. The health of our forests depend on this key stone species. Our forests are also home to 17 endangered or at-risk species of wildlife. We cannot allow the practices proposed in HB 4105 to impair our forests, which also drive a \$550M outdoor economy. This move must be checked now.

I urge you to oppose this Bill. Instead, I encourage this committee to focus on measures that would increase carbon storage in our state forests and safeguard our public resources for our children and future generations.

Please do not let this bill pass out of committee.

Sincerely,

”
Donna Acord