

Submitter: Richard Wilen

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 bill prioritizes logging over all other forest values on state forests, values which are important to all Oregonians. If passed this bill would undermine the state forest Habitat Conservation Plan and would lead to more clearcuts, degrade critical habitat for fish and wildlife, and decrease carbon storage on state public forests that help buffer against future changes in our climate.

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 carbon storage. The proposed bill disrupts these established processes and tips the balance totally to the most destructive use, short rotation timber production.

The bill creates a new, special right for the timber industry to sue the Department of Forestry to force more logging on state forests which I strongly object to. It would end up with costly non-stop litigation the state would have to defend against at taxpayer expense.

The state can't afford this short sighted legislation with an enormous fiscal impact.

I urge you to oppose this bill. Instead, I encourage this committee to focus on safeguarding public state forests and waterways for current and future generations. Take the long term view, not exploit our beautiful Oregon ecosystems for short term profit.

Please don't let this bill pass out of committee.

Sincerely,

Richard Wilen
Farmer
Yoncalla, OR