

Submitter: Karen Kirschling
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Measure, Appointment or HB4105
Topic:

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

I oppose - and I urge you to oppose - House Bill 4105. This timber industry bill would weaken protections for Oregon's state forests. HB 4105 would require the Department of Forestry to pass a timber harvest rule that would prioritize clearcut timber harvest at the expense of all other values—values like clean water, fish and wildlife, recreation, and carbon absorption and storage. HB 4105 would also create a special right for recipients of timber revenue to sue the Department of Forestry to force more logging on state forests. And it threatens to undermine the implementation of the state forest Habitat Conservation Plan and the Climate Change and Carbon Plan for state forests that we have fought so hard for.

In summary, it prioritizes timber production over other forest values on state forests. It undermines the state forest habitat conservation plan and would result in more clearcuts, more lawsuits, less habitat for salmon and wildlife, and less carbon storage.

The bill is unnecessary. The Department of Forestry regularly meets or exceeds its timber harvest goals, often at the expense of clean water, habitat for fish and wildlife and carbon storage goals.

It is also expensive. The state can't afford unneeded legislation with a large fiscal impact, especially with the current fiscal crisis.

It would lead to more costly litigation. The bill creates a new right to sue the Department of Forestry. It would only allow recipients of timber revenue access to the courts to challenge implementation of the timber harvest rule.

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 don't let this bill pass out of committee.

Sincerely,
Karen Kirschling