

Submitter: Austin Sumpter

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: Opposition to House Bill 4105

My name is Austin Sumpter. I live in the outskirts of Canby in rural Clackamas County, Oregon, specifically in Senate District 26 and House District 51. I testify today to express my opposition to House Bill 4105, a proposal to open up Oregon's forests for the timber industry.

Oregon's forests are a treasure trove for exploration and recreation of all sorts, from hiking to camping to fishing and more, enjoyed by me and many other Oregonians. They're the lungs of our state, helping to sequester carbon dioxide emissions from the atmosphere, and helping to serve as natural wildfire buffers as the climate crisis warms up our state. Countless wildlife species, including some of the 300 imperiled species living in Oregon, turn to forests for their habitat. In a time where public lands are facing threats like never before, including escalating plots to auction lands out to private developers, the last thing we should do is betray our own forests, wildlife and recreationists with a short-term profiteering gift to the timber industry.

This pro-timber bill will run roughshod over Oregon's forest Habitat Conservation Plan and result in future lawsuits, less habitat for imperiled species, broader clearcuts and pesticide discharge that harms drinking water for many communities, and less carbon storage. Please stand by Oregon's forests and oppose this bad bill. Instead, this Committee must focus on measures that will increase carbon storage in our state forests and safeguard public resources for future generations. Do your part by voting "no" on House Bill 4105.