

Submitter: Colleen Weiler

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, and Members of the Committee,

I oppose House Bill 4105 and its amendments. This bill would prioritize clearcutting Oregon forests over other critical values such as clean drinking water, clean air, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation. Our state forests are worth more standing — it is unacceptable to prioritize timber harvest over all the other values these forests offer .

I love hiking, camping, and recreating in state forests and on public lands. The incredible forests of Oregon are what makes these experiences so incredible. Without trees, there is less wildlife, more extreme temperatures, and worse views.

This bill would result in more lawsuits and could cost the state millions of dollars.

This bill would also result in more clearcuts and less habitat for vulnerable fish and wildlife. It would lead to less mature and old-growth forests, and less carbon storage on the landscape at a time when climate change is becoming more severe. We are not having a winter on the Oregon Coast, and I am extremely worried about water availability and drought this summer. We need legacy forests to maintain ecosystem functions and provide climate and wildfire refuges for fish and wildlife species and help provide clean drinking water for Oregonians. Old-growth trees have both fire resistance and the ability to enhance water storage and access, creating cooler microclimates that slow evaporation and lower stream temperatures. That will become increasingly important in Oregon as climate change effects increase.

This bill does not represent the public lands vision I want my elected leaders to support. I urge you to oppose this bill. Instead, I encourage this committee to focus on measures that would protect Oregon legacy forests, safeguard fish and wildlife, and protect communities drinking water for our children and future generations.

Please oppose this bill and ensure it does not pass out of committee.

Sincerely,
Colleen Weiler
Newport, Oregon