

Submitter: Maxwell Richter

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. I have worked in natural resources in Oregon for the past 3 years. Many of my friends do as well. We have seen first hand how the timber industry decimates our forests and I would hate to see you aid them in that endeavor. This bill undermines the state forest Habitat Conservation Plan and would lead to more clearcuts, more industry lawsuits, less habitat for fish and wildlife, and less carbon storage on state public forests. It directly goes against the goals and values that we have been working for.

Additionally, this bill is redundant and expensive. 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. It would require costly rulemaking and lead to non-stop litigation the state would have to defend against at taxpayer expense. The bill creates a new, special right for the timber industry to sue the Department of Forestry to force more logging on state forests. The state can't afford unneeded legislation with an enormous fiscal impact.

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

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