

Submitter: Heather Shelton

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 timber industry bill prioritizes logging over all other forest values on state forests. It 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.

The bill is unnecessary. 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 bill is expensive. 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.

This bill does nothing to improve the lives of Oregonians or the land they inhabit. As one of those beings, I love and appreciate the forests here. I imagine you do as well. We count on you to support our lives in your role as representatives. Please represent we the people rather than industry and corporate greed.

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. We know that trees are one of our best sources of health as they provide cooling for the planet and oxygen for us to breathe. Choose health for all over wealth for a few.

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

Sincerely,
Heather Shelton, Retired Nurse