

Submitter: Deborah Rocha

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. A mandatory harvest rule is a terrible idea.

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. I live in Eugene and our drinking water comes from the Mackenzie River. I am concerned that we could lose water quality with increased logging that is not managed well.

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.

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. Our beautiful forests are important to our quality of life and should not be subject to a mandatory harvest rule.

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

Sincerely,
Deborah Rocha