

Submitter: Devon Lawson

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB4105

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, and Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Devon Lawson. I am testifying today in opposition to HB 4105.

While the stated intent of this bill is to provide "reliable forest management outcomes", a close reading of the text reveals that it will actually produce the opposite. Instead, it is unreliable outcomes, increased litigation, and a direct conflict between state mandates and biological reality.

I urge a "No" vote for three specific reasons.

Section 3(2) grants explicit standing to any entity receiving timber revenue to sue the State Forester if harvest targets are not met. This provision effectively privatizes the management of public lands. It incentivizes counties and special districts to sue the state whenever market fluctuations or operational delays cause a dip in harvest. You are creating a "litigation tax" on the Department of Forestry. Every dollar spent defending these lawsuits is a dollar not going to schools or counties. This replaces the expert discretion of the Board of Forestry with the injunctive power of the Marion County Circuit Court. Do we want judges managing our timber inventory?

The bill mandates that if a harvest target is missed, the unharvested volume must be added to future cuts, treating the forest like a warehouse of non-perishable goods. A forest is a living ecosystem, not a bank account. You cannot "double up" extraction in Year 2 because you harvested less in Year 1 without causing severe ecological stress. This "catch-up" provision ignores the reality of wildfire recovery and climate resilience. It forces the state to log aggressively exactly when the land might need to rest.

The bill directs the State Forester to implement harvest policies prior to federal approval of a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). This creates a statutory demand to log that may directly conflict with the federal Endangered Species Act. If this bill passes, we are setting up a collision between state quotas and federal law. The result will not be "more timber"; it will be a federal injunction that halts all operations.

HB 4105 attempts to solve a complex management issue with a blunt statutory quota. It prioritizes the "rights" of revenue recipients over the land's health and the state's

sovereignty. It will lead to more lawsuits, not more logs.

Please vote NO.

Thank you.