

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action: Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Rescind the Subsequent Referral to the Committee on Ways and Means

Vote: 3 - 0 - 2

Yeas: Beyer, Prozanski, Avakian

Nays: 0

Exc.: Atkinson, Bates

Prepared By: Sue Marshall, Administrator

Meeting Dates: 5/24

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Establishes Task Force on Oregon's Hybrid Poplar Industry consisting of seven members appointed jointly by the Speaker of the House and the Senate President. Directs Task Force to study hybrid poplar industry and review law and rules, specifically those related to tax assessment and regulatory issues, and report back to interim committee no later than December 1, 2007.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Whether poplars should be treated as an agricultural or forest product
- Merits of the bill

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: No amendment.

BACKGROUND: A "hybrid" plant is produced when pollen of one species is used to fertilize flowers of another species. A hybrid poplar is a tree resulting from the combining, either naturally or artificially, of various poplar species into a hybrid. Hybrid poplars are among the fastest-growing trees in North America and are used commercially for pulpwood, engineered lumber products and fuel source. Hybrid poplars are currently exempt from special forestland assessments when harvested on a rotation cycle of 12 years or less after planting. Such poplars are also exempt from provisions of the Forest Practices Act.

House Bill 3481-A establishes a task force to study the Oregon Hybrid Poplar Industry and report back to an interim committee with its recommendations no later than December 1, 2007.