

I'm Don Esch, an Oregon Constituent and a small business owner,

My business involves small scale mining and I am in opposition to SB 838.

I have been involved in small scale mining for over 25 years, building up my business to help support myself upon retirement as a Professional Firefighter of over 36 years.

I am the holder of four federal mining claims, including one gold claim and four thunderegg claims—the state rock—one of which is on display in the show case here in the capitol.

Senate bill 838 could possibly shut down my operations causing me a loss of monies spent—in excess of \$40,000 dollars spent in equipment and supplies, money I have spent to our local economy.

The 5 year moratorium placed in this bill would possibly make it impossible to continue any operations at a later date, by which time I could possibly be deceased. Firefighters usually do not live to long because of our occupation.

A moratorium to do more studies. Why? There is plenty evidence from previous studies showing some of my operations have a less than significant impact if not more of a beneficial effect upon the environment by removing toxins and rejuvenating streams. It would be an unnecessary waste of our taxpayers monies from studies trying to support environmentalists claims, law suits, and additional a loss of income to the miner and the businesses that support them.

As an Oregon Constituent, I strongly oppose SB 838, and would hope you would do so likewise.

SB 838-1 is one though that I would support. It appears to be more reasonable bill that I would prefer to have you pass in your committee.

Thank you for allowing me to testify and I would be glad to answer your questions.

Donald Esch

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