



# Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

## Department of Forestry

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"STEWARDSHIP IN FORESTRY"

February 4, 2016

The Honorable Brad Witt, Chair  
House Agriculture and Natural Resources Committee  
900 Court Street NE, Room 347  
Salem, OR 97310

**RE: HB 4140 – Prohibits Release of Sky Lanterns in Oregon Airspace**

Dear Chair Witt and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Forestry appreciates the opportunity to provide neutral testimony regarding HB 4140.

The Department supported HB 3199 in the 2013 session, which established a ban on the release of sky lanterns on or over forestlands during fire season. House Bill 4140 would remove references to sky lanterns from ORS Chapter 477, thereby making their prohibition statewide at all times. The bill preserves the State Forester's authority to enforce this prohibition consistent with the manner provided in the 2013 legislation. It makes no other changes to prohibited activities that were addressed in 2013.

Preventing fires is a key component of the Department's responsibility. The last three fire seasons have been very challenging and highlight the need to prevent fires before they happen. House Bill 4140 will prohibit the release of sky lanterns and therefore reduce the likelihood of fire starts on forestland.

The Department of Forestry again thanks the committee for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding HB 4140, and I would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

Doug Grafe  
Division Chief  
Fire Protection Division

c: Doug Decker, State Forester  
Richard Whitman, Governor's Natural Resources Policy Director  
Brett Brownscombe, Governor's Natural Resource Policy Advisor  
ODF Executive Team