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4550 Oak Grove Rd.
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Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources
Chair Michael Dembrow
Vice Chair Alan Olsen
Senator Herman Baertschiger
Senator Floyd Prozanski
Senator Arnie Roblan

Re: SB 892, 892-1

My name is Sarah Deumling, owner and manager of 1400 acres of commercial timberland in Polk County. I am writing in support of SB 892 and 892-1. Reflecting on 30 years of experience raising and harvesting trees commercially I see the danger and risk of the aerial spraying of pesticides to people, plants and animals as more than enough to justify the inconvenience caused to the timber industry by SB 892 and 892-1. Those bent on the practice or aerial spraying can absorb the extra cost and bother of notification as outlined in the bill. If they feel the cost is too much to bear they have other options: 1) to employ backpack crews to apply the chemicals* or 2) or to skip the chemicals and end employ crews with machetes to release the seedlings. We have done the latter for many years with good success as part of the management of a successful timber operation. Our trees are healthy as are our frogs and birds and pollinators. Our neighbors like us and we provide jobs for 6 to 8 people for several weeks every year to release our seedlings.

There is a definite awkwardness around the scheduling of aerial spraying with unpredictable weather conditions. Even the most conscientious timber owner is going to, on occasion, have trouble finding the right day to spray safely. Therefore the larger window of 892-1 is the better option, giving a little more flexibility to find a day when weather meets the requirements for an aerial application. However, there are numerous examples of pesticide drift occurring even when flying conditions are good. That is exactly why this bill to alert nearby residents is needed. People just want to be safe.

*In talking with a reputable contractor who does both backpack and helicopter release operations I learned that there is virtually no difference in cost, the former just takes longer.

Thank you for your work on this important topic.
Sincerely,
Sarah Deumling