



Oregon

Kate Brown, Governor

Department of Forestry

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Honorable Michael Dembrow, Chair
Environment and Natural Resources Committee
Room S-407, State Capitol
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301



Re: Senate Bill 633 – Relating to financial relief for commercial forestlands damaged by catastrophic fire events.

Dear Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

The Department of Forestry appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony on Senate Bill 633. At this time, the Department has no position on the bill.

Generally speaking, private forest owners harvest timber following wildfire events to recoup timber value. Per the Oregon Forest Practices Act, private landowners are then required to reforest as defined in ORS 527.745. This statute prescribes that reforestation should commence within 12 months after the completion of timber harvest and that seedlings should be “free to grow” by the end of the 5th growing season.

From 2002-2010, the Department implemented a reforestation tax credit program for underproductive forestland. This program was also used for reforestation following catastrophic fires, however the main purpose was to encourage long term forestry investments on suitable but under-producing forestland. This program was discontinued and sunset in December of 2011.

To establish the program as proposed in SB 633, the Department would be required to initiate rulemaking to define certain terms and procedures to ensure effective implementation of the program. After establishment, the program would require reallocation of existing duties and/or additional financial resources to implement the program. At this time, the magnitude of those costs to implement the program are not known.

Sincerely,

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c: Peter Daugherty, State Forester
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