



E X E C U T I V E O F F I C E

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HB 2656 Testimony – House Committee on Energy & Environment - March 12, 2019

Chair Helm and members of the committee, my name is Doug Cooper, I'm a Forester with Hampton Lumber, and the Vice President of Resources. I am speaking today in opposition to HB 2656.

Hampton Lumber is a family-owned company, founded in Oregon 75 over years ago, and headquartered in Portland. Hampton owns and operates four sawmills in NW Oregon in the communities of Warrenton, Tillamook, Willamina and Banks. HB 2656 threatens the immediate and long term economic viability of our sawmills and the rural communities in which we are vested.

We have over 600 employees in rural Oregon, and another 150 employees that work in Oregon that are indirectly affected by the operations of our four sawmills. Employees at these sawmills average over \$50,000 per year in wages, and have both high quality health care and retirement benefits.

In 2018 alone, Hampton's manufacturing and forest operations in Oregon, paid out nearly \$450 Million dollars including wages & benefits, parts & supplies, payments, contract logging and trucking services, log supply purchases, and investments in our plant sites. We are not only financially invested in the communities in which we operate, we are extraordinarily proud of the individual and collective contributions our employees make to strength the social fabric of their communities.

Hampton owns and manages 89,000 acres of forestland in Oregon certified to sustainable forest practices. We ensure compliance with the Oregon Forest Practices Act, and the regulations overseen by the Oregon Departments of Forestry, Environmental Quality and Agriculture. 51% of those acres are located within the "drinking water source" areas serving public water systems that are identified in HB 2656.

Oregon forests, managed with contemporary practices, grow trees as well as any forestlands in the world. Active management of our forestland increases carbon sequestration, increases carbon storage, and produces clean water and wildlife habitat. Forestland roads provide access to recreation opportunities, and protection against wildfire.

HB 2656 would cripple our ability to cost effectively and competitively manage our forestland. Our Oregon sawmills produce wood products to meet the local, regional and national demand. If wood products are not produced here in Oregon, they will come from other regions or countries where weaker environmental controls will compromise the success of Oregon's existing policies and practices.

I urge this committee to reject HB 2656 and the additional layers of unnecessary restrictions that will crush the capacity of rural Oregon communities to produce wood products and sustainable benefits for us all. Thank you.