

Pam Birmingham psbirm@yahoo.com

Hello,

I will not be able to attend the hearing on March 12 for HB2656 however it is an extremely important step toward protecting personal property rights in Oregon. I urge you to approve this well written legislation. Having been to several hearings on forestry issues I really wish I could be there (but I am currently in New Zealand) since the timber industry will have put out a Call to Action and thereby pack the hearing room. This issue is not about numbers in the hearing room but protection of our health and individual rights. As long time real estate broker I have first hand knowledge that people living in our rural areas value clean water from healthy watersheds. Below is my official testimony in support of HB2656:

Thank you for taking the time to consider the Safe Waters Act of 2019 (HB 2656). As a 30+ year resident of rural Clatsop County I have first hand knowledge of the devastating effects poor forest management can have on individuals.

Oregon Department of Forestry was allowed to exchange a stand of older forest (some trees up to 150+ years old) to a timber company who subsequently clear cut the entire parcel. Prior to the exchange it was an “unmanaged forest” with an intact watershed and ecosystem which supported endangered species.

My domestic water source came from a spring fed creek on that property and is registered with the Oregon Water Resources Department under well log CLAT 53917. Even with that in place the timber company was allowed to destroy the watershed which caused a complete failure of my water system.

Subsequently I lived for over two years in my home with no

running water. Before the system completely failed it was sprayed with aerial herbicides.

Oregon Department of Forestry was well aware of my domestic water source but when they traded that parcel of land to the private timber company they made no provisions for protecting the water source. The private timber company said they had no legal constraints to protect the water source or system.

So, the timber company walked away with several hundred thousand dollars or more in their pocket and I was left living in a home with no running water. Along with the damage to me, there was tremendous environmental damage to native salmon runs and the entire watershed. Please do the right thing for all the citizens of Oregon and pass this act. Oregon should no longer be held hostage by big timber.

Thank you,

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