

The Honorable Ken Helm, Chair  
House Committee on Energy and Environment  
Oregon State Capitol  
900 Court St NE, H-385  
Salem, Oregon 97301

March 13, 2019

RE: HOUSE BILL 2656 (HB 2656)

Chair Helm:

My name is Kellie Drake, and approximately twenty-eight years ago, I was a displaced timber worker! However, I currently am working in the forest industry and have for 27+ years. I would like to take this time to appeal to you for a "No" vote on HB 2656.

This bill would devastate the forest industry! What many people do not understand is Douglas fir and Western hemlock do not grow well under canopies (in the shade). So commercial thinning helps the existing stand grow, but to generate new timber, you must be able to clear-cut, otherwise you will eventually end up with dead and diseased trees that will ruin the "green" Oregon we all love.

Not only would you see hard working Oregonians lose their job in the woods, but also through a trickle affect job losses would occur in the lumber mills, trucking, farming, building construction, and the list goes on. I wonder how that would affect the unemployment rates, a drain on the Oregon health plan, foreclosures, skyrocketing housing costs, etc. This bill is not good for our state!

The timber industry pays millions in taxes annually to the state, and by allowing this disastrous bill to pass, would cause less monies to be sent through these same taxes to our schools, economic development, communities, Oregon Department of Forestry, and the general fund. It would then cause each household to pay more taxes in other methods, whether it be property tax, rent, fuel, as well as open a door for a potential sales tax. This bill would not be good for the social and economic values of the Oregon constituents.

In my opinion, the Forest Practices Act is more than adequate to protect the watersheds. The people who manage and work in this industry and their families drink the same water that is supplied to the communities where they live.

The herbicides that are applied to the lands are effective to help this renewable resource that is so vital to this state. Do we really want more scotch broom (a noxious weed)?

This state would then have to import the lumber from a foreign state. Are we living in Oregon to support another state's economy?

Thank you for your time in allowing me to submit my opposition to HB 2656!

Kellie Drake  
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