

Michelle Barnes <seth.michelle@gmail.com>

Committee members, please vote no on HB 2656, this is just wrong for Oregon. It's hard for me to imagine that this legislature would consider such a drastic approach to "fixing" what already constitutes our best drinking water sources in Oregon, our working forests! Oregon is blessed with robust natural resources, abundant water, lush forests, beautiful mountains. All of us enjoy clean air, clean water, and gorgeous scenery. We are spoiled with abundant recreational lands to enjoy; from breathtaking beaches to lush forests and majestic deserts. Some of those lands are owned by private companies, and further contribute to our natural resource economies. These lands are super important. The water coming off of them is already protected by the Oregon Forest Practices Act. DEQ testing shows that those rules work, and that water is clean. Oregon is known for it's timber industry, and rightfully so. Wood to Oregon is like apples to Washington, or potatoes to Idaho; it's just part of who we are as Oregonians, it is in our history, and a vital part of our future. The world needs good, renewable building materials, and Oregon is America's best source of those resources. We have created a system that works to protect water and wildlife while also balancing those economic and social needs. HB 2656, completely unnecessarily takes a wrecking ball to that system! Has this legislature taken the time to consider what happens to forest lands when they are not managed? Federal lands in California/Idaho/Washington/Utah/Oregon, Paradise California, anyone...? Why would we voluntarily walk down that path when our water from working forests is already so clean? Furthermore, as a mother of children ranging in ages from high school to pre-school, why is this legislature wasting time on such non-issues with "solutions" that would cripple our economy when we can't even seem to educate our children effectively?!?!? I love Oregon, but bills like 2656 drive me crazy, when is enough enough? Vote no on HB 2656.

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