

March 20, 2019

Members of the House Committee on Energy and Environment,

HB 2656 is an unreasonable bill that would destroy family forest owner's ability to sustainably manage their own lands; 3.6 million acres of family forestland in Oregon.

As a young female with a family history in the timber industry, and a soon to be bride to a man and family with deep roots in timber and forestry, HB 2656 affects me on a personal level that threatens a proud tradition and future economy of my family, community, and our state as a whole.

HB 2656 would be devastating to Oregon's Wood Product Industry that is a pivotal piece to Rural Oregon, where most family forest owners live. As stated above this not only affects families Oregon's Wood industry is important to Oregon's economy as a whole. The areas defined in HB 2656 are responsible for over 75% of the wood fiber used by Oregon mills to make carbon-sequestering products, used by all Oregonians.

There is no science that supports the intent of HB 2656 or that Oregon will have improved water quality should HB 2656 pass. Department of Environmental Quality data confirms the best water quality in the state comes from forested watersheds. Science also shows there is no difference from watersheds with active forest management and those without active forest management.

With the restrictions of HB 2656 forests will become prone to catastrophic wildfire, like the unmanaged federal forests in Oregon that are responsible for 86% for the acres burned in Oregon wildfires in the last 10 years. Wildfire is the greatest threat to water quality in Oregon. California is a good example of when forest practices are restricted, as in HB 2656, the result is increased wildfires, catastrophic losses, and lost water quality.

As I am sure you will read from many, we have achieved a healthy and sustainable timber practice here in Oregon. We are world leaders in the industry, please allow us to continue this tradition and support our families, communities, and our State.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Staci Bielenberg

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