

From: [Joni Zimmerman](#)
To: [Exhibits HNR](#)
Subject: Please support HB 2659
Date: Monday, March 25, 2019 9:33:02 PM

To the Committee:

I represent a grass roots group of citizens from several communities in Yamhill County, called CAPOW - Community Advocates Protecting Our Water. Our goal is to determine potential threats to our water supply and water quality, and take action while we still have decent water, to prevent reaching a crisis.

I regret that due to a last minute family situation I am unable to come to Salem to testify in person, so I am submitting this written testimony.

Our group strongly supports this bill, as one that will not only help to protect the water resources of many of our communities, but will help with preventing catastrophic climate change as well. Clearcutting and other industrial forest practices are the leading source of greenhouse gas emissions in Oregon, and one of the biggest threats to the resiliency of our rural communities as climate change unfolds, because clearcut lands and timber plantations are far more susceptible to wildfires, flooding, drought, and toxic algae blooms than natural forests. Despite this, Oregonian taxpayers subsidize these practices at a rate of over \$300 million per year.

Tax breaks and subsidies tend to increase logging above and beyond the levels we would expect from a free market. So removing these subsidies should reduce logging pressure and associated carbon emissions. Over \$100 million per year could be freed up to invest in climate smart practices that employ far more workers than conventional practices. Counties could receive up to \$200 million per year in funds for schools, infrastructure, and social services.

I strongly believe that we must immediately stop subsidizing any and all industries that contribute to climate change, and that do not directly help to mitigate climate change. I was struck by reading some of the other submitted testimony and understanding how much this would help small forestland holders who are using sustainable, healthy forest practices. This is a good bill.

I would like to call the committee's attention to this timely article, originally published in Scientific American and republished here by the World Economic Forum.
https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/03/our-most-powerful-high-tech-climate-solution-is-our-forests?fbclid=IwAR3_OwjhAar0X8_uuMqW-GqMrctHIIJRQ0wGKZ-vn21j554saAJgJVph7gM.

The latest IPCC report does not mince words about the state of our planet: we must act now to achieve global change at a scale that has “no documented historical precedent” in order to avoid the climate catastrophe that would result from a 2 degree C rise in average global temperature. Climate change already disproportionately affects the world’s most vulnerable people including poor rural communities that depend on the land for their livelihoods and coastal communities throughout the tropics. Indeed, we have already seen the stark asymmetry of suffering resulting from extreme weather events, such as hurricanes, floods, droughts, wildfires and more.

So far, advocates and politicians have tended to focus on reducing fossil fuel consumption through technology and/or policy, such as a steep carbon tax, as climate solutions. These proposals are, of

course, essential to reducing manmade carbon emissions—71 percent of which are generated by just 100 fossil fuel companies. For this reason, fossil-fuel–related emissions reductions rightly figure heavily in the national climate commitments of the 181 nations that signed the global Paris Agreement.

Yet the international focus on fossil fuels has overshadowed the most powerful and cost-efficient carbon-capture technology the world has yet seen: forests. Recent scientific research confirms that forests and other “natural climate solutions” are absolutely essential in mitigating climate change, thanks to their carbon sequestering and storage capabilities. In fact, natural climate solutions can help us achieve 37 percent of our climate target, even though they currently receive only 2.5 percent of public climate financing.

Forests’ power to store carbon dioxide through the simple process of tree growth is staggering: one tree can store an average of about 48 pounds of carbon dioxide in one year. Recent research shows intact forests are capable of storing the equivalent of the carbon dioxide emissions of entire countries such as Peru and Colombia.

For this reason, policy makers and business leaders must create and enforce ambitious policies and incentives to prevent deforestation, foster reforestation of degraded land, and support the sustainable management of standing forests in the fight against climate change. Protecting the world’s forests ensures they can continue to provide essential functions aside from climate stability, including producing oxygen, filtering water and supporting biodiversity. Not only do all the world’s people depend on forests to provide clean air, clean water, oxygen, and medicines, but 1.6 billion people rely on them directly for their livelihoods.

Unfortunately, we are fighting a crisis of deforestation, much of it driven by conversion to agricultural lands to produce a handful of resource-intensive commodities, despite zero-deforestation commitments from companies and governments. With increasing atmospheric carbon dioxide, insufficient emissions reductions and continued high rates of deforestation, urgent action is needed to avoid the worst effects of climate change.

Now is the time to increase investment in and attention to forest protection and restoration. In doing so, we will also address a number of other pressing global issues. For example, increasing tree cover can help address the problem of food security in many areas. Trees can enhance farm productivity and provide farmers with another source of revenue through the sale of fruits, nuts or timber—all while storing carbon dioxide. It is estimated that increased investment in the multi-strata agroforestry area could help sequester up to 9.28 gigatons of carbon dioxide, while saving a net \$709.8 billion by 2050. In production landscapes where large-scale tree cover increases are difficult, agroforestry serves as an attractive compromise.

And in less-developed, rural areas—especially in the tropics—community-based sustainable forest management programs can provide pathways out of poverty. In the Petén region of Guatemala, for instance, community-managed forests have boasted a near-zero deforestation rate over the past 14 years, as compared to 12 percent in nearby protected areas and buffer zones. These communities have built low-impact, sustainable forest-based businesses that have bolstered the economy of the region enough to fund the creation of local schools and health services. Their success is especially poignant in a region otherwise besieged by deforestation; outside the community-managed zones, deforestation rates increase by 20x.

Finally, landscape restoration promises an unparalleled return on investment, in terms of ecosystem services and carbon sequestered and stored. Landscape restoration could potentially sequester up to 1.7 gigatons of carbon dioxide every year, according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature. Reforestation projects can also intersect neatly and positively with human systems—restored forests provide a renewed resource base and new economic opportunities for communities.

There is good work being done on this front already. The Bonn Challenge, issued by world leaders with the goal of reforestation and restoration of 150 million hectares of degraded landscapes by 2020, has been adopted by 56 countries. Many governments and groups pledged to halve global deforestation by 2020 through the New York Declaration on Forests. And in an exemplary display of public-private sector cooperation, the Cocoa and Forests Initiative in Cote d'Ivoire and Ghana aims to end deforestation from cocoa cultivation.

With world leaders gathering in December for their yearly U.N. climate talks, the time is ripe for concrete action on forests and natural climate solutions. World leaders now have the opportunity to make big gains on climate by dramatically ramping up their investment in proven, natural solutions. More trees in the ground. More reforestation projects. More sustainable forestry. More avoided deforestation through sustainable agriculture and certified crops.

I think this bill is definitely a step in the right direction towards solutions that this article presents. I and my fellow members of CAPOW hope that you will support this bill.
Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this critical matter.

Sincerely,
Joni Zimmerman
Newberg, Oregon