

Chair Clem, Vice-Chairs McClain, Post and Committee Members

I am not planning to travel from LaGrande to comment in person on the need to adopt Amendment A2 for SB 408 which would retain the current language of "at least" rather than change it to "more than". If you believe it would be helpful, I will be home during the hearing and would be glad to respond via phone to any questions you might have. Alec and I have had ongoing communications regarding this bill and I am confident that he understands my concerns and can verbalize them. I would appreciate it if you would read the testimony I submitted for the 3/5/2019 Senate hearing on this bill. My concern and the basis for my previous testimony in opposition to this bill is pretty straight forward. Originally, the statute read that land capable of producing "at least" 20 cfa could not be divided under this statute. The new bill changed the term "at least" to "more than" 20cfa. In Eastern Oregon, this is a huge change. Most of the forested land in Union County is rated 20 cfa with a few areas rated 50 cfa. Use of the term "more than" would open all forested land rated 20 cfa to division under this statute. That would mean most of the productive forested land in Union County could be divided. Leaving the term "at least" means that most of Union Counties forested lands could not be divided. Only the poorly producing forested land could be divided, which is as I understand it the intent of the statute..

Given the economic importance of the production of timber on lands in Union County, and the fact that to the most part, adhering to Oregon's Land Use Plan does provide protections for this resource, any changes to the current restrictions should be carefully considered. There are already multiple exceptions to retaining existing tracts of forested lands. As it reads absent Approval of Amendment 1B, this bill would allow yet another exception which undermines the protections provided by Oregon Land Use Laws.

Thank you very much.

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