

No on HB 2357

OFRI was established by the Oregon legislature 30 years ago to provide objective and unbiased forestry information to students, landowners, and the public. Those that live in urban/suburban areas, often have little knowledge of what it takes to provide the many products provided by our forest industry and need to be continually reminded. Today, with a much larger audience, and even more issues in the public eye, the need for OFRI is even greater.

OFRI explains how our forests are managed in an environmentally safe and sustainable manner. They are very effective at telling this story in a comprehensive manner. As a registered engineer with 40+ years in environmental management, I know that OFRI goes out of its way to gather the best scientists to compile state-of-the-practice summaries on a wide range of forest topics. OFRI is exactly what Oregon needs.

OFRI is entirely funded by an industry harvest tax. OFRI is very responsive to current and emerging issues, as identified by our commodity commission, which operates very much like the 22 other commodity commissions in Oregon. Why is OFRI the only commodity commission targeted for take-over?

The Secretary of State's office is currently conducting a performance audit of OFRI, with a report expected this summer. So why are HB 2357, 2379, and 2598 prematurely pushing to take over OFRI's timber harvest tax and eliminate all of its functions? How will the all-important functions of forestry's commodity commission, OFRI, be replaced?