

Thank you to the Chair and members of the committee for taking the time to review my testimony in support of House Bill 2357 today. My name is Rebecca Krop, I am an educator from Eugene, Oregon.

I first encountered OFRI while working as a teacher with the Northwest Youth Corp. The youth corp, in partnership with the US Forest Service, presents students with the opportunity to explore the world of education through the lens of stewardship, service, and collaboration with partnering community members. While developing curriculum for a course in Natural Resource Management, I was forwarded OFRI curriculum by the Oregon Department of Forestry, who I now know to be active assists to the board of the Oregon Forest Research Institute as liaisons.

At the front of the twelve week high school curriculum packet, OFRI claims, and I quote, "to work closely with the scientific, academic and educational communities at Oregon State University, the Oregon Department of Forestry and other agencies to ensure its K-12 resources are accurate and objective." Despite this, upon reviewing the curriculum, I was shocked to see the prominent influences of the timber industry in drafting the narrative that this educational tool intended to bring into my classroom.

OFRI's forestry curriculum appears to approach forest science by cherry-picking and skewing information to cast the timber industry as benign. OFRI's curriculum underplays the impacts of clearcut logging, inadequately distinguishes the carbon sequestration potential of old growth forest from plantation forests, and actively contributes to the false narrative that forest laws in Oregon are not only strong, but sufficient. As a teacher, my job is to promote unbiased learning in the classroom, to help students develop a critical lens through which to process the scores of media influences in their day to day lives. I had hoped that a government funded curriculum would provide an unbiased, fact based resource to support in this endeavour, but the OFRI curriculum left me sadly disappointed, and disenchanting.

As an educator, on behalf of my students, I ask today that this committee vote yes in support of House Bill 2357. For us, a vote in favor of this measure signals a hope for our future. A hope for unbiased, fact based curriculum, for greater opportunities to promote place-based and science-backed learning programs, and hope for an education system funded by our state that will inspire youth to fight for a healthy and sustainable environment for all future generations to come. Thank you.