

First of all I want to thank the chair and members of the committee for reviewing my testimony today.

My name is Roby Ventres-Pake, and I work as a fisheries biologist on river restoration projects across the Pacific Northwest, and as an educator in the Centennial School District in Gresham, Oregon. I am requesting your support for House Bill 2357, to eliminate the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) and the Oregon Forest Resources Institute Fund.

As a scientist I work hard to ensure that I collect and report accurate information no matter the situation, and I have high expectations that my work is used with integrity by people who shape plans and policy on ecological issues, even when reality may be inconvenient for powerful stakeholders. As an educator, I care deeply about the truthfulness of what I teach and the future of our next generation of Oregonians. My work in both these fields has left me feeling doubly disturbed by the illegal lobbying, attacks on scientific research, and dissemination of pseudoscientific curriculum by the Oregon Forest Resources Institute.

In August of 2020, *The Oregonian*, *OPB*, and *ProPublica* published a report exposing OFRI for suppressing science on logging and climate change, and engaging in illegal lobbying efforts to further the timber industry agenda. Many of OFRI's advertisements contain misinformation and skew the facts to support the timber industry. OFRI's educational curriculum, which is supposed to be based in science, downplays the impacts of clearcut logging, fails to recognize the carbon sequestration potential of old growth forests, and actively contributes to the false narrative that Oregon has exceptionally strong forest management laws. On top of it all, OFRI's propaganda is being funded by millions of dollars of taxpayer money.

It is time for the unethical conduct, biased structure, and taxpayer-funded influence of OFRI to end. As both a scientist and an educator, I am asking that this committee vote yes in support of House Bill 2357.

Thank you.

Roby Ventres-Pake