

My name is Marlene Acker, I live in Tillamook County.

In our rural area here, we are surrounded by forests to the east and the Pacific Ocean to the west. Logging, timber mills as well as agriculture and fishing are our major industries. These industries can be categorized as basic needs of humans. In recent years, our communities have had to rely on tourism and the hospitality trade with very mixed results.

I am speaking today not only to testify, but to protest the impending taxes that are proposed against our timber industry. All taxes for that matter. Although this is recent news, the revenue forecast has indicated there is not a money problem. What is not in the news is where is this money coming from, and where is it going. Before ANY more taxes are imposed, all departments need to be scrutinized for successes and/or failures and corrected.

I am not going to repeat all the numbers and statistics that have been offered to oppose these taxing bills, those will be covered in the overwhelming written testimony that you will read.

I am going to offer a true story from our local area that occurred during the Labor Day wildfires.

Pike Road Fire: Tillamook's Largest Wildfire in 40 Years with 301 acres burned.

Fighting the fire began immediately, behind Bay City, with available firefighters from all of Tillamook County's Fire Districts and the Oregon Department of Forestry. Usually, a fire of this complexity and size and threatening structures would warrant an outside incident management team and as Ed Wallmark, Protection Unit Forester, remembers it "we would have called an outside team, but they just weren't available, so we made up our own and got it done."

We can be extremely thankful for the local resources who quickly went into action. I counted 15 logging, excavation, and forest product companies from the list who quickly surrounded the perimeter and kept it from spreading.

They were LOCAL companies who harvest and help manage our private and state forests. Without the expertise of these people, we most likely would have had a different outcome than 301 sq. miles that burned. Raising the costs of doing business for them, along with many other regulations for living, are strangling the

very businesses who saved us. I ask that when you see a logging truck, a chip trailer, an excavation wide load trailer, please wave, smile, and support. They saved us and would do it again when called upon.

This is the way of life in rural Northwest Oregon. We have forests that should be managed and maintained by those who know how. Trees are cut, replanted, and they grow back. The hills are bare for a little while, but it does not take long to get back to green. This renewable resource should be celebrated and nourished, instead of the punishing taxes and regulations it endures.

The timber industry has a long tradition in this state from its inception and has suffered considerably from regulation and fires. It is time to bring our natural resource back to full potential. More taxes are not the answer.