

Hi,

I support SB 335 because it reduces conflict of interests, gets the governor more involved in forestry--a critical issue given climate change and wildfires--and eliminates committees that favored the timber industry over conservationists.

First of all, the bill reduces the number of members who can have conflict of interest due to ties to the timber industry from the current 3 of 7 down to 2 of 7. It also requires one of the two timber members to be a small woodland owner and defines the income level that creates a conflict as \$1000.

The bill also gives the Governor the power to hire and fire the State Forester. Right now it requires a majority of the Board of Forestry to make that decision, with no formal role for the Governor. Given the increasing importance of forests to both wildfire and climate change, it makes sense to make the position more responsive to an elected official.

And, just as important, the bill eliminates the Regional Forest Practices Act Committees. There are three of these standing committees and by law they must be controlled by people with strong ties to timber production. There are no such committees for conservation interests.

Thanks for your consideration.

Lisa Cohn, Portland