

Committee Members,

I am writing on behalf of 350PDX Forest Defense to request your support for SB 335, revising governance of the Department of Forestry. As you are aware, climate change is a serious threat to all Oregonians. Standing forests are one of the best tools to fight climate change – they keep massive amounts of carbon out of the atmosphere. However, intensive industrial logging practices greatly reduce the amount of carbon stored in forest landscapes. As a climate justice organization, 350PDX is asking Oregon's legislature to fight climate change by working to increase forest carbon storage in Oregon.

We are concerned about the long history of timber industry dominance of the Board of Forestry. With employees of the timber industry occupying three of the seven seats on the Board, forest policy decisions are excessively influenced by the timber industry. Regional Forest Practices Advisory Committees also serve as a part of the industry's overpowering voice on policy decisions. The changes proposed in SB335 would reduce the influence of the timber industry on the Board of Forestry by reducing conflict of interest on the Board. Giving the Governor the power to hire and fire the State Forester will make ODF more accountable to the people.

The reforms in SB335 are a necessary step to governing Oregon's forests for all forest values – including carbon storage, wildlife habitat, community water supplies, and recreation – not just for timber industry profits. We ask that you support this bill as a step towards forest practices that serve the needs of all Oregonians.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,  
Leslie Grush  
Co-Lead, 350PDX Forest Defense