

Chair Jeff Golden, Vice Chair Dallas Heard, and Committee Members:

I am writing in opposition to SB 335-3. My name is Annabelle Morgan and I live in Washington County and have forestland in Lincoln County. Reducing representation from the Forest products industry reduces the diversity needed to make critical decisions on forestry management in Oregon. In addition, the elimination of the three Regional Forest Practices Committees reduces the necessary input from these regions, all of whom have forests and habitat that are unique to these areas, so the Oregon Board of Forestry needs to be inclusive in considering their experiences and concerns when implementing, overseeing, and making any changes in regulations with these in mind. Without the input of this practical, experience-based knowledge of how regulations will impact landowners, foresters, and loggers who work daily in the woods, the Board cannot make educated decisions. The annual income limit imposed by this tax is also not in the best interest of getting the best Board Members since it severely restricts the pool of people being considered so that the decision is based on this rather than on who has the broadest experience and practical and/or degree-based education to bring necessary input to the Board. As a member of a county 4-H Association, we have representation from all project advisories, community members, and youth so decisions are based on a diverse population who all have the best interests of the children in mind. I would think that it would be evident that those of us in the forestry industry who want to keep our forests sustainable by following science-based best practices that are included in the ODF regulations, also are vested in looking out for the best practices to attain that goal in conjunction with the Board of Forestry. Reducing representation only weakens rather than strengthens the ability of the Board to make sound decisions.

Having the Governor appoint the State Forester instead of the Board of Forestry is also counter-intuitive since those on the Board are already appointed by the governor and have the education and knowledge needed to best select the most qualified person for this very important role. This should not be dependent on any one political agenda or be politicized and change at the will of one individual. Having the State Forester report only to the Governor politicizes the position rather than making it reflective of the oversight of the Board who have expertise needed to determine the qualifications and duties of that position and can evaluate the goals and regulatory issues as circumstances change. With the governor's work last year to great the MOU to work with representatives of all Oregonians to form the Private Forest Accord, the value of meeting together of representatives from both timber and environmental groups to work on these issues indicates the importance of input from all factions to come to agreement on the composition of the Board of Forestry, so they need time to meet and to bring their recommendations forward.

In its present state, the Board of Forestry is both inclusive and transparent and reflects a good balance and necessary input from all the groups most vested in evaluating, implementing, overseeing, and changing any forestry-related regulations necessary to continue keeping Oregon's forests thriving and healthy today and in the future.

Thank you for your time. SB 335-3 is neither necessary nor beneficial to the structure and selection of Oregon's Board of Forestry, so I ask you to vote no on this bill.

Respectfully,
Annabelle Morgan