



Associated Oregon Loggers, Inc.

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March 29, 2021

The Honorable Jeff Golden, Chair
Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire Recovery
Oregon State Capitol
Salem, OR 97301

Subject: SB 337-3 **OPPOSE as written**

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Heard and Committee Members:

Introduction

For the record, my name is Amanda Astor. I am here on behalf of the Associated Oregon Loggers (AOL) as their forest policy manager. AOL is the statewide trade association who has been the voice of small family forest businesses for over 50 years.

Thank you for the opportunity to share with you the voice of nearly 1,000 small family forest businesses who **oppose SB 337 and its -3 amendment as written**.

AOL's members work daily to steward Oregon's forests, following all of the pertinent environmental laws. These honorable small businesses led by forestry professionals employ more than 22,000 Oregonians who provide sustainable forest management services for Oregon's public and private forestlands, while producing economic stability for their communities and living wage jobs for their employees and families.

Through pride and integrity, independent family businesses deliver quality forestry support services including hazard reduction, fire protection, forest restoration, reforestation, road construction, recreation access, material transportation, harvest operations, silviculture services, consultation, and other forest management activities. AOL's members are a critical link in the forest product supply chain. The forest contracting workforce is comprised of over 17,000 employees in forestry contracting and transportation plus, an additional 4,500 employees that provide support for contractors, are immigrant workers or are self-employed owner operators.

These independent small businesses employ forestry professionals that include Certified Foresters and Oregon Professional Loggers.

Regional Forest Practice Committees

Different regions in Oregon have vastly different ecological and economic concerns. The Regional Forest Practice Committees (RFPCs) exist in order to address these differing concerns in a forum free from discrimination and full of those who have experience implementing the Forest Practices Act. This forum allows for open and honest dialogue that leads to workable solutions.

It is truly critical to have knowledgeable practitioners on the RFPCs. This on-the-ground experience allows intelligent conversations leading to practical results. If these technical committees were to include non-experienced peoples then the intent of the committees would not be served.

Quite frankly, AOL would suggest requirements for our members from the operating community to be included on the committees. Our members are the Oregonians who implement the laws and practices pursuant to the Forest Practices Act

every day and know where things could use improvement and how improvements may take shape to be implementable on the ground.

If those from the “conservation” community have this experiential knowledge and can speak eloquently about the technical aspects of adhering to the Forest Practices Act and operations on the ground, then perhaps they could be a good fit.

Thankfully, AOL has members who participate on forest collaboratives. Although forest collaboratives work almost exclusively if not absolutely exclusively on federal lands which are not privy to the requirements of the Forest Practices Act, AOL would be happy to work with our knowledgeable members to put forth an appropriate practitioner for the Board to consider. Please also note that many collaboratives are not set up with “boards”. This language, as drafted in the -3 amendment, could restrict or completely fail to produce a qualified individual for the RFPCs pursuant to subparagraph (c) of the amendment.

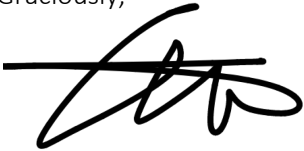
Conclusion

Thus, AOL believes maintenance of the current RFPCs makeup is warranted. Perhaps, to add balance, a member of the different sectors within the marketplace could make the committees more diverse. There could be a member from the forest contracting sector, a small business owner, the manufacturing sector, the large landowner voice, the small woodland voice or other such voices within the diverse wood marketplace.

If this is not a pathway forward to increase diversity, then AOL at least suggests requiring a working knowledge of forest operations and minimum on the job experience utilizing and following the Forest Practices Act in their career.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on our views in **opposition to SB 337 and the -3 amendment as written.**

Graciously,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Astor', written over a horizontal line.

Amanda Astor (she/her/hers)
Forest Policy Manager