

2021 April 04

House Committee on Revenue

RE: HB 2379

I strongly urge the Committee members to support the reenactment of timber severance taxes in the State of Oregon. The revenues lost to county governments when the Legislature removed the severance tax decades ago resulted in dire cutbacks in vital County-provided community services causing serious ills that affect all of us, directly and indirectly, such as increased rural poverty, joblessness and homelessness in almost all Oregon Counties.

The reenactment of the timber severance tax should have minimal effect on large and small timber operators as it will only bring Oregon into parity with other Pacific Northwest timber states, the tax will only be assessed when timber is actually harvested adding only marginally to the total cost of the wood, and since over 75% of Oregon timber is sold out of state, the increased cost will be mostly born by out of state timber purchasers.

It is time for Oregonians and their Legislators to recognize that County-provided community services are just much an integral part of our infrastructure as roads and public security and that our whole state will continue to suffer if we don't fund them adequately.

We send our Legislators to Salem to make wise decisions that will serve our current needs and those of future generations of Oregonians. Reenacting the timber severance tax is just one step to funding our physical and social infrastructure to create a strong Oregon!

Thank you!

Kevin Shanley