

April 8, 2021

House Revenue Committee

Representative Nancy Nathanson, Vice-Chair Representative Khanh Pham and members of the committee,

RE: HB 2379

I oppose HB 2379 for multiple reasons but will focus on just two as I understand others will clearly articulate why creating a severance tax is bad public policy. The two areas I will discuss include wildfire funding and the funding of the Oregon Forest Resources Institute, OFRI.

My name is Mike Barsotti. I am a family forest landowner in the Lyons area, a forester, and past president of Oregon Small Woodlands Association. My wife and I own a small 19 acre forest and care deeply about healthy sustainable forests. We have our forest certified under the internationally recognized American Tree Farm System's Standards of Sustainability.

I currently serve on the Technical Advisory Group of the legislative mandated fire cost study. There should be no changes to how wildfire is funded until this independent study provides its findings to the legislature later this month.

OFRI provides valuable information on the management of Oregon's forestlands to landowners and the public. Understanding the complexities of forests is ever evolving and OFRI sponsored educational programs, research, and publications are important for all, both landowners and Oregon's citizens. OFRI is a benefit for all Oregonians but is paid for by forest landowners through the Forest Products Harvest Tax.

Please reject HB 2379