

Chuck Willer
Executive Director
Coast Range Association
RE: HB 2357

Dear Chair Nathanson and members of the Committee:

I am testifying on behalf of the Coast Range Association (CRA) in support of HB 2357 because the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) is not responsible in representing scientific information to our schools and the general public. This should come as no surprise since, after all, OFRI is a promotional organization for industrial timber and wood products. As such, we support the idea of prohibiting OFRI from engaging in "generalized advertising for public education."

The CRA also support redirecting half of the timber tax to support climate science, reporting and monitoring of pesticide use in forest operations, and forest management addressing the climate emergency. Specifically:

- Support for the science and management for carbon sequestering forestry. We need to know the amount of forest carbon that is emitted by current financial forest management.
- Enhanced reporting and monitor use of toxic chemicals in our forests. ODF needs to disclose the amount of chemicals it uses, and those used by industry. The use of chemicals is impacting our drinking water, shellfish, salmon, terrestrial and aquatic life.
- Adaptive management. We need ODF to help landowners address the fire risk from private industrial forest operations. We also need to focus our resources on protecting homes and communities.

Issues with the Oregon Forest Resources Institute

- **OFRI markets corporate propaganda as curriculum for schools:** OFRI's forestry curriculum cherry picks forest science and skews information to cast financial forestry as benign. OFRI's curriculum provides a green veneer for Wall Street driven financial forest management and presents timber industry messaging points as forest facts.
- **OFRI misleads Oregonians through advertising:** OFRI spends millions of dollars annually to push out television, radio and digital media advertisements spreading the message that Oregon's forest laws are strong. OFRI's advertisements ignore the stories of Oregonians currently experiencing the negative impacts of financial forestry, and dishonestly suggest that Oregon is a leader in environmentally sound forestry.
- **OFRI attempts to silence scientific research:** In an attack on academic freedom, OFRI executives lobbied legislators and university officials to undermine

groundbreaking forest-climate research conducted by a team of scientists at Oregon State University's College of Forestry.

- **OFRI's members represent the wealthiest elite in the U.S. and world:** While OFRI presents itself as a government agency, the organization is, by law and the facts of timberland ownership, dominated by investor owned timberland companies. Which is to say that OFRI represents the interests of the wealthiest strata of U.S. and global society due to the commanding concentration of business and financial equity in the wealthiest U.S. and global households. 60% of U.S. equities are owned by the wealthiest 1% of U.S. households. 35% by foreign nationals and entities. Should the interest of the rich for ever more profit come before the interests of Oregonians? We think not.
- **OFRI illegally lobbies against climate-smart forestry:** As a publicly sponsored organization, Oregon law prohibits OFRI from lobbying. Yet, OFRI has worked to lobby against climate change legislation and stronger logging regulations to protect clean water and communities. All of OFRI's work to confound forest-climate science occurs while a majority of Oregon's Congressional delegation have declared a climate emergency. Something is deeply wrong.
- **OFRI supports political attacks:** Public employees at OFRI participated in an election campaign briefing that featured political attack ads against Governor Brown from dark money group *Priority Oregon*.

In summary, the CRA wants:

- Forest climate science and policy to reflect the fact we are in a climate emergency.
- Remove public sponsorship from propaganda on behalf of wealth and power.
- Independent, science-based forestry and climate school curriculum.
- Academic freedom and unbiased support for research. Sexist bullying must end and end now at the OSU Collage of Forestry!
- Forest policy informed by the best forest science on behalf of the public's interest.
- Redirect OFRI funds to benefit the people's interests.

Given that the state of the world is a climate emergency, OFRI's has lost its social license on forest science and policy due to its long-standing disinformation campaign and its illegal, behind-the-scenes efforts to undermine public understanding on key forest policy issues. Given our circumstances, now more than ever, Oregonians need independent, truthful scientific information about forests and climate issues.