

February 13, 2021

Chairman Brad Witt and Committee
House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources
900 Court Street NE, Room 453
Salem OR 97301

Dear House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources:

My husband and I are small woodland owners in the Camp Creek area, northeast of Springfield, Oregon. We sustainably manage 33 acres for timber production. I am sending you this note because we are deeply concerned about HB 2357 which would end OFRI and HB 2379 which would increase timber harvest taxes.

We understand the role our tree farm plays in contributing to Oregon's clean water, clean air, and wildlife habitat. The Oregon Forest Resources Institute is a great bolster to small woodland owners like us, assisting to educate the public regarding forestry and advocating the biodiversity of healthy forests. We appreciate that the Oregon Legislature created OFRI in 1991.

In 1993 we planted 8,000 Douglas Fir and Ponderosa Pine seedlings. Prior to planting, the west end of McKenzie Ridge had only a small stand of Douglas Fir with scattered natural reproduction, otherwise, this was a grassy area. Old timers had told us elk never came to our end of the ridge. But now, due to the cover of our 28-year-old forest, we have had an elk herd as large as 52 head visit here. We know we have improved wildlife habitat as we manage our land according to standards of sustainability.

In 2018 it was time for our first pre-commercial thinning throughout 24 acres. We sent 7 loads to local mills. After paying our logger and our self-loading trucker, and paying our harvest tax, this thinning job proved a break-even financial endeavor for us. If timber harvest taxes were increased, we can only imagine we would lose money at harvest—for small woodland owners, increased timber harvest taxes would discourage crop rotation and be a detriment to healthy forest management.

During the last quarter of 2020 we battled an Ips Beetle infestation among our Ponderosa Pines, with our only recourse being to remove over 30 of these affected and non-marketable trees. It is not easy or cheap to grow trees! Please vote against increasing timber harvest taxes and please vote against eliminating OFRI.

Sincerely,



Heidi Christian, Certified Tree Farmer
McKenzie Ridge Tree Farm
88956 Sky High Drive
Springfield OR 97478