I support HB 2357 because I am opposed to the waste of public resources. For three decades, the Oregon Forest Resources Institute (OFRI) has used tax dollars to promote the logging industry. Along with misleading advertising, OFRI also provides educational materials for schools and school kids that are - at best - one-sided and heavily influenced by the goals of industry. In some cases, their materials are objectively false. Though expressly prohibited from lobbying, OFRI has consistently worked to undermine scientific research, oppose reform efforts, and mislead Oregonians about the effectiveness of our forest laws in protecting critical resources like clean water and wildlife habitat. Research published by Pro Publica and Oregon Live in the article "What Happened When a Public Institute Became a De Facto Lobbying Arm of the Timber Industry" documents numerous recent incidents of illegal and unethical behavior by OFRI officials.

OFRI's members represent Big Timber. It is completely funded and dominated by the timber industry, but presents itself as a government agency. Its messaging reflects the interests of its funders, not those of the general public. It sells pro-timber propaganda as school curriculum, downplaying the negative impacts of forest management practices such as clearcut logging and presenting timber industry messaging points as facts. In an attack on academic freedom, OFRI executives lobbied legislators and university officials to undermine groundbreaking forest-climate research conducted by scientists with Oregon State University's College of Forestry. It lobbies against climate change legislation and stronger logging regulations to protect clean water and communities, and has even engaged in political attacks.

I support HB 2357 because it would increase transparency in use of public funds, support independent, science-backed curriculum, forest policy informed by factual, forest-carbon and climate science, and academic freedom, and benefit Oregon land and people instead of one special interest group, Big Timber.