

After listening to some of the testimony at the hearing yesterday, I can see that both sides have some very good points. I wonder if the bill could be modified, as someone suggested, so that small-scale landowners are not taxed (or taxed at a lower rate), but large-scale absentee owners must pay Oregon for the extraction of our resources. Yes, tree plantations are "renewable," but they do cause substantial damage to soil and water, especially during the years when the replacement trees are small.

Also, we should be clear that these are not forests. They are farms. Forests are diverse in plant species and age, retain moisture and support all sorts of fauna. You almost never see substantial running water in a clearcut or tree plantation. Those of us who spend time in the woods definitely know the difference.

One of the landowners said that taxing harvests would encourage owners to harvest on shorter rotations so as to avoid higher taxes. Since the tax is only a percentage of total income, that doesn't make a lot of sense unless someone just wants to avoid taxation, but it occurred to me that there may be an opportunity to make taxation work in favor of longer rotations; i.e., could the tax percentage be decreased as the trees get older?

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.