

Dear Representative Brad Witt and Committee Members,

I support HB 2357.

It is heartening to see this bill under discussion in the Agriculture & Natural Resources Committee.

HB 2357 can help promote students' understanding and appreciation of Oregon's forests by defunding OFRI. Perhaps more important, it supports truth and science. The Oregon Forests Resources Institute's educational materials do not reflect current scientific and climate realities.

As a retired 30-year Oregon public school educator, I know how fortunate I was to teach science in the classroom and in outdoor school forests. The public should be confident that the state-endorsed and taxpayer-funded OFRI curriculum contains the latest forest science. This is not the case. Instead, the best application of OFRI's materials is showing students examples of propaganda, such as this brief video, "Clear-Cutting In Oregon". It's perfect for teaching critical thinking skills---but is this the reason we fund OFRI? There are plenty of free examples of propaganda.

Now more than ever, we must teach our youth about Oregon's unique natural gifts, ecology, economy and how they can effectively interact. They do not need to develop cynical mistrust for state-supported information that is distorted to benefit special interests.

Please support Oregon's students, the truth, science and HB 2357.