

**February 2, 2022**

**Senator Jeff Golden, Chairman**

**Senate Natural Resource and Wildfire Committee**

**Oregon State Capitol**

**Salem, Oregon**

**RE: Oppose Senate Bill 1501**

Dear Chair Golden and members of the Senate Natural Resource and Wildfire Committee:

I am a small forest owner and the Planning Director for Curry County, Oregon. It is difficult to keep up with the many backroom deals based on idealistic armchair adventurers feeding into the kind of legislation proposed in SB 1501 and the Private Forest Accord. This legislation poses extreme management hurdles for small timber owners and further facilitates the transition of Oregon's valuable timber lands to residential use by the flood of wealthy Silicon Valley migrants. The changing landscape will be shocking and will erode the current well managed timber resource of Southern Oregon. It behooves this committee to at least pull back the slap across our faces that we are feeling by not being allowed review or comment on the PFA document prior to this hearing. This is not the Oregon way. The PFA and SB 1501 is an Oregon model for lack of transparency and a put down of small Oregon landowners.

We are feeling great anguish towards this legislation without representation. The bits and pieces of what may be in the PFA are beyond comprehension to the small timber owners who are slogging the hills every day planting trees, fighting invasive species, protecting our forests from the flood of migrants and cartels looking and taking opportunities to steal water, pollute our streams and degrade our land. The writers of this legislation seem to have very little knowledge of the day-to-day work involved in actively managing a forest. The travesty is that the promoters of this legislation clearly don't want any practical forest management input from the people on the land. The expectation that small timber owners will be able to set aside large areas of land to riparian corridors in trade for limits on timber harvest is an ill-conceived plan. Our coastal environments include vast numbers of stream corridors.

This legislation will not result in better management of our resources. Instead, it will result in the elimination of the small timber owner and the demise of the Southern Oregon private timber industry. I, like most small timber owners, have received multiple, million dollar + offers on my well managed timber land. These offers come from large financial investors, corporate timber companies and wealthy individuals who are trying to escape urban areas. Rarely do these purchasers invest the time or resources to actively manage the timber land. Most log the land for short-term cash, apply for land use approvals for a house, let the land and any newly

planted trees be overtaken by gorse, scotch broom, or tanoak and then sell it - most often to someone who lacks the knowledge of what to do on the land. The timber value becomes negligible in these unmanaged parcels and the land instead becomes extremely vulnerable to wildfire. I have seen too many of these cases in Curry County over just the past three years. Most small timber owners do not want to sell out. The land and the hard work that goes in to keeping the timber valuable is our motivation. This legislation effectively demoralizes such motivation.

**I would request that this committee consider either 1.) a collaborative process to review and revise this legislation with small timber owners; or 2.) an exemption for small timber owners (5,000 acres or less) to this legislation.**

Sincerely,

Becky Crockett