

Submitter: KB Mercer
On Behalf Of: Myself and my husband
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources
Measure: SB90

Dear Chair Golden and Members; of the Committee

My name is KB Mercer and my husband, David Huffman and I live in Portland. I am also on the Steering Committee of the Metro Climate Action Team.

We urge you to support SB 90. For too long rural counties with state forests have been dependent on revenues from logging on our state forests to support a variety of public services. This is a no-win situation for our state forests.

This task force needs to examine funding options that will be a win-win for both our state forests and for rural communities. Those communities need clean, safe drinking water and public libraries. Those rural counties with state forests in them need rivers that provide habitat for spawning salmon, and they need to fund public safety. This is not an either/or issue. This is a both/and issue.

The current funding system is unstable, pitting important government services against healthy forests, clean water, and outdoor recreation—even as both are critical for resilient communities. Recent polling shows that Oregonians place a higher priority on clean water, salmon and recreation over timber harvest.

We need this task force that SB 90 will create to begin the conversation on what potential alternative funding sources could be used to help those rural areas so that they are no longer dependent on revenue from logging. We need to enable the Oregon Department of Forestry to attend to the many other greatest permanent values including habitat protection, clean drinking water, and recreation. In addition, our state forests need to be a carbon sink, not a carbon source.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of SB 90.

Sincerely;

KB Mercer and David Huffman
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