



Clatsop County

Board of Commissioners

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February 24, 2023

Senate Committee on Natural Resources

Regarding: SB 795

Dear Chair Golden, Vice Chair Girod and Members of the Committee,

The undersigned members of the Clatsop County Board of Commissioners support SB 795; thus, creating the option for counties to request that the State Board of Forestry convey state forest lands based on the determination that the county would secure the greatest permanent value.

The Forest Trust Land Advisory Committee (FTLAC) and Council of Forest Trust Lands have been meeting for years to protect the interest of the counties in the management of Oregon state forests. The input of these advisory committees has not been adequately considered in the development of the draft Western Oregon State Forests Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). Clatsop County's local economy, public services and social fabric are at risk, with little to no consideration by the State for our local perspective, expertise and needs.

The historical architecture for forest trust lands was founded on a partnership between the trust land counties and the State of Oregon – with the mandate to manage based on greatest permanent value. As the Department of Forestry has pursued the HCP, the once strong partnership has been discarded, downplayed and ultimately devalued. The Department of Forestry has worked without an interest in, or understanding of local values, local economics and local impacts on education, health care, first responders (police and fire), other government services and the social and philanthropic underpinnings of our community.

Whereas, a viable and effective HCP should consider environmental, economic and social factors in partnership with the impacted community; the Department of Forestry has created the “worst case” HCP – that will negatively impact the health and stability of our community for generations to come. Trust Land Counties need additional options by which to protect the forest, wildlife, streams/rivers and riparian areas, while still protecting our communities.


SB 795 simply provides an option for these mostly rural communities to influence their own destiny. If the state will not faithfully and adequately consider the health and sustainability of local communities in their forest management planning; the Counties will.

The Department of Forestry treatment of local partners is unfortunate and directly contributes to inequitable and unacceptable outcomes for rural communities. This should be a concern for

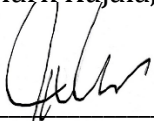
anyone who loves this great state. We are confident we can simultaneously protect the environment and support the essential underpinnings of a healthy and sustainable rural community – family wage jobs, quality schools, accessible health care, public safety and affordable housing.

Clatsop County supports SB 795.

Sincerely,



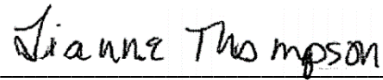
Mark Kujala, Chair



John Toyooka, Commissioner



Courtney Bangs, Vice-Chair



Lianne Thompson, Commissioner