

Submitter: Deborah Knapp

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB795

Dear Chair Golden & Committee Members,

In late summer of 2021 we experienced several days of wildfire smoke from a nearby wildfire. This adversely affected our community as smoke is not a healthy substance for the respiratory system, especially for the infirm and elderly. The wildfires and attendant smoke is a direct result of poor management of our forests. Senate Bill 795 can help to solve this problem by conveyance of local control to counties for more efficient and sound management of our forest lands. Making all forest lands under state control creates a monopoly of state power that is not well versed in the diversities of each county. Every county community is different, with varied needs and land use policies. This bill can help reduce the load on the state, and consequently on its citizens, in trying to oversee all forest lands within our state. Allowing our county commissioners to take on responsibilities for lands in accordance with a conveyance will benefit Oregonians, and the various citizenry of each affected county. It was not the state that we were in contact with when we had to consider the possibility of evacuating during a nearby wildfire. It was our local county sheriff's office. When given a chance, counties can protect the environment and support sustainable rural forest lands within their own communities. SB 795 will give this opportunity to counties and their communities within. I support SB 795 for the benefit of local communities statewide.