

Submitter: Jan Mitchell

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB795

Oregon forest policy and the care of forest resources are under transition. All you have to do to see how our forests are faring is to fly over the patchwork state or notice the preponderance of snow covered clear cuts during our recent storms. Current practice is not sustainable. Oregon legislators have delayed re-doing the taxing structure which places rural counties in jeopardy by favoring Wall Street REITs and forcing school districts and county government to tie themselves to pressure for harvesting younger stands and advocating the elimination of older stands of trees. We must connect our practice to the realities of climate change, rather than pretending it will all go away. Rural counties have trouble with taking the best actions for the long range health of forests when they are dependent on timber revenues for covering basic functions. The loss of timber jobs has more to do with automation than with protection of clean water and wildlife. All of this requires coordinated policy statewide, not competing raids on our remaining forests. Please do not vote for this measure. Greatest permanent value must involve more than timber revenues. Small communities need clean water and clean air free of toxic spraying. I fear that county commissions will want to look the other way in order to protect what they now have. It would be easier for them and allow them to hang on to their outdated denials of the reality of coming change.