

To: Senate Committee on Natural Resources  
From: Nadene LeCheminant  
February 27, 2023

**OPPOSE SB 795, County Takeover of State Forests**

Dear Senator Golden, Senator Girod and members of the Senate Committee on Natural Resources,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer testimony on SB 795, a bill that would allow state forest land to be taken over by counties. I urge you to OPPOSE this bill and ask that you not move this bill out of committee.

The Oregon Supreme Court has upheld the authority of the Oregon Board of Forestry to manage state forests. SB 795 is an attempt to re-litigate the Linn County lawsuit.

The passage of SB 795 threatens to undo decades of work toward science-based, balanced management of state forests. Oregon state forests should continue to be managed for the “greatest permanent value.”

Oregonians overwhelmingly support clean water, enhanced recreation, and protections for wildlife and fish over timber harvesting in our state forests, according to a recent poll commissioned by the Oregon Values and Beliefs Center, in consultation with the Board of Forestry. For a majority of Oregonians, managing for the “greatest permanent value” means managing for healthy, vibrant forests. Oregonians want to see more protections put in place, not fewer.

Our state forests belong to all Oregonians and not just residents of the county where they are located. As a state, we need to help create a sustainable future for our rural counties that is not dependent on logging, but this Senate bill is not the solution. These forests should remain under the stewardship of the state, as mandated by the Oregon Supreme Court.

I urge you to oppose SB 795.

Thank you for your consideration.

Nadene LeCheminant  
Salem, Oregon