

Submitter: Angelita Sanchez

On Behalf Of: 60000 working Oregonians

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure: HB4106

Chair Helm, Vice-Chair Hartman and Vice-Chair Owens, and members of the committee.

My name is Angelita Sanchez and I am the Co-Director of the Timber Unity PAC. We represent 60,000 working Oregonians who sustain their family with natural resource living wage jobs.

When mills close and forestry jobs go away, our rural communities suffer the most. I consider our people one of the most vulnerable and negatively impacted people, when it comes to these types of issues.

I see folks from out of town, big urban cities and even out of state, testifying against those of us who love to live and work in these towns. I wonder if they know that The State of Oregon made a promise to the counties and communities, to steward these state forests while promising to harvest the timber to the greatest permanent value? The resources were promised to support our counties and provide for schools, emergency services and the communities in whole. This new and improved HCP breaks that promise. Our communities deserve to be whole. Not only that, but do they know that without timber harvest, the OR Dept. of Forestry will go bankrupt? Then what, who even wins?

When mills close and living wage jobs are lost, truly there is not much more to sustain us. I live in a small rural timber town of 10,000. We constantly have a lack of access to family wage paying jobs. So when the forest is locked up, no longer allowing local stewards of the land to manage and harvest timber sustainably, we set ourselves up for even more catastrophes. Does anybody remember the wildfires we saw in 2020? Can't you see all the negative effects we are still working through, to this day?

In case you are unaware, rural communities had serious problems again, even just a few weeks ago, with weather events and unmanaged forest. Unmanaged trees were crumbling under the ice, putting our communities at an even greater risk. We had a loss of power and loss of many emergency services because of the damage. Sweet Home, the community where I live, was even worried about the loss of our municipal water supply, because of the enormous amount of downed hazard trees and tree damage. That caused our city to lose power to run our local water plant. A miracle came through, but we can't always rely on miracles. It's critical to rely on properly

managed timberlands well.

It's easy to imagine the outcome of unmanaged forests because we don't have to imagine, we have been living it and seeing it first hand. No power, no water, massive wildfires, no jobs, no emergency services funding, no rural school funding. For the life of me I can not understand why we promote equity and diversity for all, and yet continue on with this recipe for disaster, destroying our rural communities. Is that equitable?

Timber is a sustainable natural resource, just like an agricultural crop. It needs to be managed, harvested and replanted, to realize the greatest permanent value, as well as for the safety and the livelihoods of our most vulnerable communities. We are standing in support of this bill, and thankful to the sponsors for standing with us. Now we request the committee to stand along side us all in support of HB4106 as well.

Thank you