

Submitter: Chris Johnson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Finance and Revenue

Measure: SB1593

I strongly oppose SB 1593. This bill claims to study a way to fund wildfire but the Legislature already funded a quarter of a million dollar study on wildfire funding in 2020. We don't need another costly study.

This isn't even a true exercise in academic study – it's a lopsided attempt to gather information that will help one legislator make a case for increasing taxes on the timber industry in 2025.

The Private Forest Accord legislation (2022) was very costly for the timber industry and the full effects of it are only just being felt. And according to recent economic research, Oregon's timber industry is already taxed at a much higher rate than other businesses.

This proposed severance tax could be the final nail in our coffin as timberland owners in central and eastern Oregon. We are reeling from increased costs of fire protection on land that is not very productive relative to west side forests. At the very least, this proposal will force us to re-examine what parcels of land we should sell off for residential development just to pay our bills. Further fragmentation of forestland is probably not the intent of this ill-conceived bill, but it is an unfortunate consequence on the east side.

Please oppose this poorly conceived bill.

Thank you.