

February 19, 2024



Esteemed Chair, Vice-Chairs, and Members of the Committee,

I am Josh Estes, representing the Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers (AWPPW), a union proud to stand for over 3,500 members across the Pacific Northwest, including a significant presence in Oregon. Our members have been the backbone of Oregon's economy for generations, providing for their families through strong, union-backed, family-wage jobs in the pulp and paper industry.

Our industry is an essential part of Oregon's heritage and future, contributing significantly to local economies and sustaining families across the state. The AWPPW members have dedicated their lives to this sector, often following in the footsteps of their ancestors to support not just their households but the broader community through economic contributions and environmental stewardship.

However, our industry faces unprecedented challenges from increasing regulatory pressures, which threaten our continued contribution to Oregon's prosperity. These regulations, while often well-intentioned, have placed considerable strain on our operations, risking job losses, mill closures, and the economic stability of communities that depend on our industry. The need for relief is urgent to ensure the vitality of this sector for future generations.

In light of these challenges, we voice our strong support for HB 4106. This legislation is a critical step toward providing the relief our industry so desperately needs, ensuring that we can continue to operate sustainably while supporting our workers and their families. HB 4106 represents an opportunity to strike a balance between environmental stewardship and economic vitality, acknowledging the significant investments our industry has made in sustainability and carbon emission reductions.

The passage of HB 4106 would not only secure the livelihoods of thousands of Oregonians but also signify a commitment to preserving a vital part of Oregon's economy. It is a testament to the state's recognition of the importance of maintaining a robust, sustainable forestry sector that benefits all, from the workers in our mills to the families in our communities.

We urge the committee to stand with the AWPPW and its members in supporting HB 4106. Together, we can ensure the preservation of family-wage jobs, the continuation of our rich heritage in the pulp and paper industry, and the economic resilience of Oregon's communities for generations to come.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this crucial matter. The AWPPW is committed to engaging in constructive dialogue and working towards solutions that uphold the interests of both our environment and our economy.

Respectfully,

Joshua Estes, SHRM-CP
(AWPPW) Association of Western Pulp and Paper Workers Union