



February 28, 2024

Senator Mark Meek, Chair
Senator Brian Boquist, Vice-Chair
Senate Committee on Finance & Revenue
900 Court Street, NE Salem, OR 97301

RE: Opposition to SB 1593 (including -1 & -2 amendments)

Dear Chair Meek, Vice-Chair Boquist, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of Port Blakely, I am writing in opposition to SB 1593. There are many reasons why Port Blakely opposes passage of SB 1593 and urges the Committee to not advance this bill during this short session.

First, there is an ongoing effort in the Legislature (HB 4133) to address timber taxation and wildfire funding led by Senator Steiner. We support Senator Steiner's efforts and her work group that has invested significant time and energy to work through common ground approaches to address timber taxation and wildfire funding. This bill undermines Senator Steiner's efforts.

Second, we do not support a severance tax based on the value. A value tax versus a volume tax will incentivize growing lower value, shorter rotation, timber. Currently, Port Blakely grows longer rotation timber which creates more timber value and offers a range of other benefits, including enhanced wildlife habitat and quality water production. Also, our longer rotation management allows us to participate in a forest carbon offset project. Tax policy should incentivize creating greater value in our forests, including increased carbon removals and storage. SB 1593 does the opposite.

Third, we do not support the elimination of OFRI funding. Our forest education program works closely with OFRI, which supports the transportation costs of moving school children from their classrooms to our forests for a day of hands-on learning in the forest. OFRI also supports small forest landowners across the state by providing valuable information, such as the technical details about the Private Forest Accord.

Fourth, the study proposed is designed with biased questions and will not offer a truly balanced assessment.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to not advance this bill during this short session.

Michael Warjone
President

US Forestry

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