

Senate Bill 1051

Senate Committee On Rules

RE: Opposition to SB 1051

Chair Senator Jama, Vice-Chair Senator Bonham, and members of the committee,

My wife and I are finishing up our 25th year as Tree Farmers in the foothills of the Coast Range. We are a family owned timber tree farm focused on sustainable growth of merchantable timber, maximization of carbon sequestration/storage, and improvement of wildlife habitat & ecosystem function. The J₂E Tree Farm is American Tree Farm System Certified (2001) and we are longstanding members of the Oregon Small Woodlands Association and the Oregon Tree Farm System.

My wife and I worked in health care when we purchased our ground, and we had no practical experience in tree farming. We have been successfully guided by three institutions: Oregon State University Extension, Oregon Forest Resources Institute, and the Oregon Department of Forestry. Our ODF Stewardship Foresters have been by our side every year helping with management plans, notifications of operation, invasive species, the Oregon Forest Practices Act and the Private Forest Accord, to name a few.

We use a lot of common sense out here on the Tree Farm, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". Having the Governor appoint a non-forester State Forester, or even a having a forester not vetted by the Board of Forestry, are horrible ideas. We are seeing something akin to this at the federal level, where institutions are being run by amateurs, shifting the balance of power.

The State Forester should be a forester, period. The Governor appoints the Board of Forestry. These board members should represent diverse perspectives on various forestry issues, and should, in turn, represent their fellow Oregonians in appointing the State Forester. Shifting to a Governor appointed State Forester turns it into a political position.

Please reconsider, Senate Bill 1051 is a flawed plan.

Thanks for reading,

Dave & Sarah Ehlers
J₂E Tree Farm, LLC