

## COIN Legislative Session Worksheet for 2023

**Bill Number: HB 3019**

**Brief Description of Bill:** Relating to OFRI (Oregon Forest Resources Institute)

Transfers revenue from timber harvest tax to ODF to distribute not just to OFRI but to OSU programs in higher ed to implement environmental literacy; expands OFRI Board to include 1 environment rep and one fishery/wildlife rep.; prohibits OFRI from expending funds for certain advertising and instructs ODF to review communications for factual accuracy.

**Name of Point Person who completed this form:** Paulette Wittwer

**Email address if you are willing to be contacted with questions about this bill:**

[wittwers@comcast.net](mailto:wittwers@comcast.net)

**Worksheet Last Updated:** 2/12/23

**1. Research topic – please highlight which category best fits your bill:**

● Climate Energy Environment	● Education
● Housing/Houselessness	● Transportation
● Campaign Finance Reform	● Economics
● Immigration/Social Justice	● Crime/Criminal Justice
● Healthcare/Gun Safety	● Other:

**2. The bill's Legislative champions – sponsors, co-sponsors:**

Chief sponsors: Rep.Hudson, Sen. Dembrow, Rep Graybar

Reg. sponsors: Reps. Gamba, Campos,Golden

**3. The bill's legislative opponents:**

Many Republicans

**4. What advocacy groups are supporting this bill and why are they supporting it? Provide contact information if available.**

Oregon Wild

Multnomah Climate Action Team Forestry Working Group (Affiliated with OLCV)

**5. What groups are opposing this bill and why are they opposing it?**

OFRI staff; Oregon Small Woodlands Assn (OSWA) it's members are opposing It because OSWA is a conservative group that is closely associated with commercial timber companies and related

## COIN Legislative Session Worksheet for 2023

businesses. OFRI is very supportive of these entities. OSWA uses its newsletter and membership emails to rally members to its point of view

### 6. What is the likelihood that the bill will pass?

There has been one hearing and there were 27 testimonies opposing (primarily OSWA staff and members) and 9 supporting. It will be a challenge to pass.

### 7. What is your recommendation regarding whether COIN should take a position on this bill?

**You may want to consider the following criteria but are not required to do so:**

- a. Does COIN or other progressive groups across the state care strongly about this issue?
- b. Does this bill protect or expand the rights of marginalized populations?
- c. Does this bill help change the rules and structures of the democratic system to make it work better?
- d. Is this an issue area that is entirely controlled by the states or an issue over which states have a great deal of power?
- e. Is this fight winnable?
- f. Would constituent power add value and make a difference?
- g. Other considerations?

I recommend that COIN supports this bill. OFRI was established by the timber industry and uses Oregon tax \$ to promote corporate interests. They claim to be educational and neutral, but their materials are not. OFRI discredits scientific publications from top researchers at OSU and is not supportive of climate smart forestry ie. (long timber rotations, plantation diversity)

**8. List the relevant dates concerning the bill(s). (scheduled committee hearings, votes, lobby days, other scheduled advocacy, phone banks, post card parties, etc).** The first hearing was 2/7. So far there are not other hearings scheduled.

**9. What activities does the advocacy group wish to mobilize COIN members or other activists to engage in? (phone calling, post cards, emails, LTEs, lobby days, other?)** Contact Representatives, especially those that are on the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water. We will organize testimony if there's another hearing.

**10. Are there any media contacts?** No

**11. Is there any other important information about your bill?**

**Here is my testimony to the first hearing on HB 3019:**

## COIN Legislative Session Worksheet for 2023

I am writing to support HB 3019, Relating to OFRI. This bill is long overdue in establishing changes in the budget and activities of Oregon Forest Resources Institute. For too long OFRI has been a mouthpiece for corporate timber companies and practices that are not in line with conservation of our forests and water. My husband and I have a woodland and farm in the upper Hood River Valley. We have some understanding of farm, forestry, logging and water issues and we disagree with the one-sided views on forestry that OFRI presents to the public.

One of the most objectional aspects of OFRI is that it is funded by Oregon taxpayer dollars. We shouldn't have to pay for PR and lobbying that benefits private forest industries. However, It isn't just the dollar cost; OFRI's actions influence opinions that affect Oregon's water, habitat and our capacity to cope with climate realities.

HB 3019 is a step in the right direction, shifting part of the harvest tax revenue that currently supports OFRI to fund OSU Programs including K-12 education that includes environmental literacy. Other positive parts of the measure expand the OFRI Board to include a more diverse, conservation- oriented membership, prohibits the institute from spending funds on advertising or outreach and gives ODF the responsibility to review the accuracy of OFRI's communications. I hope this bill moves forward successfully and ends up providing needed changes in OFRI.