

House Committee On Agriculture and Natural Resources

Dear Chair Clem, Vice-Chairs McLain and Sprenger, and members of the committee

I STRONGLY SUPPORT HB 4118 – Good Neighbor Authority Bill

This bill requires the Governor to review terms of the Good Neighbor Authority Agreement that the Governor, the State Forester and the State Fish and Wildlife Director entered into with the United States Forest Service on March 29, 2016. To date, no action has been taken on this agreement.

The inaction is a disservice to Oregonians and particularly in building up the economy in rural communities. This bill requires the Governor to work with US Forest Service to give priority to projects that increase services to produce increased timber harvest volumes, are self-sustaining and maximize financial return to Oregon.

The Good Neighbor Authority Agreement will help rural Oregon's economy as it establishes project parameters that affect timber harvest volume, job creation, fire prevention and response on forestland and economic stimulation.

However, the bill makes no attempt to include rural Oregon in the goal planning. The communities that will be affected the most needs prominent representation in the planning.

Donna Bleiler