



January 26, 2007

Mr. Tim Nesbitt
Office of Governor Kulongoski
State Capitol
900 Court Street NE, 254
Salem, OR 97301

Senator Floyd Prozanski
Chair, Senate Special Committee on Land Use Fairness
900 Court Street NE, S-319
Salem, OR 97301

Senate President Peter Courtney
900 Court Street NE, S-203
Salem, OR 97301

Speaker of the House Jeff Merkley
900 Court Street NE, 269
Salem, OR 97301

Mike Carrier
Natural Resources Policy Director
Public Service Building, Suite 126
255 Capitol Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Distinguished Gentlemen:

The Forest Guild is a national, non-profit organization that promotes ecologically, economically, and socially responsible forestry as a means of sustaining the integrity of forest ecosystems and the human communities dependent upon them. We provide training, policy analysis, and research to foster excellence in stewardship, support practicing foresters and allied professionals, and engage a broader community in the challenges of forest conservation and management. Our 600 members—including those in Oregon—are largely professional foresters and allied professionals that subscribe to the Guild's ecologically-based and sustainable practicing principles.

The Forest Guild's Oregon membership voted unanimously in support the following position on Measure 37: Governor Kulongoski and the State Assembly should issue a "time out"—temporarily suspend Measure 37 as well as development from land use waivers already approved. This is necessary so that the Assembly has time to develop legislation that addresses some of the sentiment that passed Measure 37—such as enabling the construction of a single home—without "giving away the farm" to those whose motivation for large profits would endanger Oregon's communities and ecosystems. As part of the process of drafting alternatives, it is essential to schedule hearings throughout Oregon so that citizens can voice their concerns about Measure 37 and help develop a comprehensive reform effort.

One way the Forest Guild demonstrates excellent forestry is through our network of model forests. Zena Timber—a Forest Guild model forest in the Eola Hills west of Salem—is surrounded by many Measure 37 claims for residential development, the most egregious of which is one for 54 dwellings on domestic wells along Zena's entire southern boundary. Such a development threatens the multiple forest values in addition to production of wood products that Zena Timber so carefully endeavors to sustain.

This is but one example of the problems unleashed across Oregon as developers, speculators, and corporations have rushed to take advantage of the giant loophole that Measure 37 has created around land use laws. At a broader scale, if the havoc being wreaked on Oregon's neighborhoods and landscape is allowed to go forward, then sensible and predictable management of Oregon's communities and ecosystems—and the services and values from them that residents depend upon for a sustainable, healthy quality of life—will be greatly imperiled. Even if Measure 37's best intentions are considered, the rush of land claims by those who are seeking to profit has exposed the measure's flaws in an undeniable way.

This is why we are asking you to issue a "time out" on Measure 37 so that alternative legislation may be developed and hearings throughout Oregon can be scheduled. The future of Oregon's communities and landscape—including its diverse and rich forests—depends upon it.

Sincerely,

Howard Gross
Executive Director
Forest Guild
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