



State Representative Greg Smith

House District 57

*Serving Union, Wallowa, Umatilla,
& Morrow Counties*

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Rep Smith Opposes Business Tax Hikes Also Supports Logging Tax Breaks

(Salem) [Representative Greg Smith \(R-Heppner\)](#) voted against higher taxes on Oregon's business community today. In separate legislative action, logging companies in Eastern Oregon and around the state will benefit from a measure Smith is negotiating.

Smith said, "during these tough recessionary times, we need to help businesses survive. Higher taxes on companies mean less money to keep and hire workers or make new investments." He continued, "I can tell you from running my own small business anytime taxes go up there is a spin-off effect on the surrounding community."

He opposed [House Bill 3405](#) which raises the corporate tax to 8% up from 6.6% on companies with over \$250,000 in company income. The measure also increases the corporate minimum tax up to \$10,000 depending on annual sales. "The best way to help Oregon's economy recover is putting people back to work, not discouraging job creation with higher business taxes."

Smith worked with legislative leaders to get [House Bill 3112](#) moving through the House Revenue Committee which will expand the personal property tax on logging equipment. HB 3112 will soon be headed to the House Floor.

"It is imperative to maintain the infrastructure of the forest products industry in rural Oregon. The health of rural communities is at stake as well as the health of our forests," said Jim Geisinger, head of the Associated Oregon Loggers. "HB 3112 will give the logging industry a shot in the arm at a time when it is desperately needed. **Representative Smith should be commended for advocating the interests of rural, natural resource dependent industries.**"

Farming equipment has been exempt from personal property taxes since the 1970's. Logging equipment was exempt in 1999, but that law expires in 2012. Smith has been working with other legislators to extend that exemption to 2018 to help logging operators plan for the future. HB 3112 covers "environmentally sensitive logging equipment" including all equipment manufactured after 1992.

Geisinger added, "family-owned logging companies are hurting worse than at any time in the history of the industry. HB3112 will provide desperately needed relief to assist logging companies to remain viable business entities in rural communities of Oregon." He added, "to our industry, logging equipment is no different than a tractor is to a farmer. Much of it sits idle during the course of the year. It is used to harvest a renewable commodity resource. It should not be subject to personal property taxes."

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900 Court Street NE H-482 Salem, OR 97301

rep.gregsmith@state.or.us ~ 503.986.1457

PO Box 219, Heppner, OR, 97836 ~ 541-676-5154