



# GROSSMAN FORESTRY COMPANY Consulting Foresters

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Senate Standing Committee  
Natural Resources, Environment and Great Lakes

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony. **PLEASE CONSIDER REMOVING THE TIE BAR FROM SB 53 AND SB 59.**

**Senate Bill 53 (SUPPORT)** is a very good piece of legislation. It clearly and carefully fixes a recognized weakness with the Qualified Forest Program (QFP) -- the complicated and onerous withdraw fees.

**Senate Bill 51 & 56 (OPPOSE)** creates an expensive, expansive and unnecessary government bureaucracy by greatly expanding MDARD and Soil Conservation District roles and responsibilities in private forest land management. This legislation will result in an estimated 30-50+ additional government positions. In addition this expansion of government comes at the expense of the School Aid Fund.

The efficient and effective alternative was included in a FY '12 house proposal based on the landowner and the landowners qualified agent certifying, in front of a notary, every 10 years, that the land was in conformance with the QFP and the management plan was up to date. The DNR would provide an audit and oversight function. If there are surplus public funds in the Michigan budget to invest in private forests, they need to be invested efficiently. A non-partisan group of interested parties put forward efficient ideas in the FY12 HB that accomplishes the same or increased outcomes without the large increase in government jobs.

**A much better path forward would be to challenge the DNR to create an efficient and effective proposal that does not involve such an expensive and large government expansion.**

It is ironic that State Government is encouraging local school districts to explore privatizing non-instructional staff as a best practice, while at the same time taking school aid funds to unnecessarily expand government employees in private forest management.

There will be consensus with some of the technical changes suggested and you will hear from others about ways to improve other elements. The following are strategic in nature:

1. If there are surplus public funds in the Michigan budget to invest in private forests, they need to be invested efficiently. Do not unnecessarily, through complicated processes & regulations, increase government employment. The Governor appointed Timber Advisory Committee recommended that the QFP and the Commercial Forest Program remain within the same agency. **Keep QFP in the DNR.**
2. **Diversion of 2 mils from the School Aid Fund (SAF) should not happen.** If 16 mils is sufficient to encourage landowners to enroll in QFP, the other 2 mills should remain in the SAF. Remember SB 53 addresses one of the biggest barriers (complicated and onerous withdraw fees).
3. Changing the minimum acreage from 20 acres to 10 acres -- bringing in high value properties, unnecessarily reducing the SAF with little to no public benefit. **Keep at 20 acre minimum.**
4. Change the minimum amount of productive acres from 80% to 50%, unnecessarily reducing the SAF with little to no public benefit. **Keep at 80% productive.**

Please call or e-mail if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gerald Grossman, ACF & CF  
MI Registered Forester #567

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Mr. Grossman received his BS in Forestry Degree from the University of Michigan and has a MS in Forestry and Masters in Business Administration from MSU. Since 1990 he has been President of Grossman Forestry Company, a full service consulting forestry business located in Newberry. The Grossman Forestry Company currently employees 7 full time foresters, 3 summer interns and provides forest management services throughout the Eastern UP and Northern Lower Peninsula.