



House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources

February 9, 2016

Support HB 4060

Oregon Farm Bureau (OFB) and Oregonians for Food & Shelter (OFS) appreciate the opportunity to comment on HB 4060. By way of background, OFB is a voluntary, grassroots, nonprofit organization representing Oregon's farmers and ranchers in the public and policymaking arenas. As Oregon's largest general farm organization, OFB represents over 7,000 member families actively engaged in agriculture and has a total membership of over 60,000 Oregon families. OFS is a grassroots coalition of farmers, foresters, and other technology users focused on natural resource issues involving pesticides, fertilizer, and biotechnology.

OFB and OFS support HB 4060 with the goal of regulating industrial hemp the same as any other agricultural commodity. Oregon's industrial hemp farmers have asked the Legislature to build flexibility into their license, and we support this request. Farmers throughout the state are looking for a crop that could increase their viability into the future. A functional industrial hemp program gives growers that option.

The current industrial hemp production license requires direct seeding and industrial hemp cultivation in a field of at least 2.5 contiguous acres. These regulations have created obstacles to farmers exploring the possibility of growing industrial hemp. While we understand that policymakers may not have envisioned a market for the human consumption of industrial hemp in 2009, we ask that flexibility be built in to the Oregon Department of Agriculture's license to allow for a variety of hemp products, including:

- Allowing cultivation in fields and greenhouses
- Allowing for the use of seeds, clones, cuttings, transplants, etc. for propagation

We believe that these fixes will also provide farmers with the tools they need to promote coexistence and resolve potential neighbor conflicts. Last session, OFB and OFS submitted testimony, supporting voluntary efforts for industrial hemp and medical and recreational marijuana to coexist in a manner similar to other crops. HB 4060 would give growers the flexibility to make decisions that promote voluntary coexistence within the cannabis community.

When it comes to the issue of pesticide use, we believe that HB 4060 appropriately treats hemp like marijuana. Like marijuana, hemp has been an unregulated market until very recently. We are concerned that pesticide products have not been tested on or approved for use on cannabis as they have for other crops. Recognizing this additional potential for risk, Oregon Health Authority has developed stringent testing standards for pesticides on marijuana. Since some hemp products are also similarly consumed by people, it makes sense for them to be tested to the same standards. The rules also recognize the fact that this

is a transition period for cannabis products, so when a grower's product passes every test for a year, they are then treated like other agricultural products which receive random pesticide tests to ensure compliance. We think this is the right way to help hemp growers make this transition into the regulated market while ensuring that public health is protected.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment in support of HB 4060.

For more information please contact Jenny Dresler of Oregon Farm Bureau (jenny@oregonfb.org) or Scott Dahlman of Oregonians for Food & Shelter (scott@ofsonline.org).