

Dear Chair Williamson,

I'm writing to urge you to vote no on HB 2739. I'm also writing as a third-generation Oregon farmer, with 40+ years experience producing both food crops and certified seed crops.

HB 2739 not only is it unnecessary, but it puts up significant roadblocks for Oregon agriculture.

Coexistence has, and does work for Oregon farmers. We have both grown GM crops, and have certified crops to be GM free. We know how to talk to our neighbors, to work out required isolations, to prevent damage by potential GM pollen drift, to our crops, or to theirs.

GE crops pose no greater or more unique risk to neighboring crops than their non-GE counterparts. Pollen drift from one conventional crop to another can be an issue, especially when we're producing certified seed, or vegetables for processing that are required to be GM free. The same techniques will work, and all of us know how to use them.

HB 2739 will put Oregon agriculture at risk, by creating a state with unique rules that will be considered the exception. Seed breeders and university researchers will be reluctant to work with GM traits and varieties. Seed patent holders have no control over what the end user does with a product. With liability for "treble damages" and no control over the growing methods used by farmers, many seed companies could stop selling certain varieties in our state, limiting choices for Oregon growers. Oregon agriculture, compared to farming in other parts of the country, is not big enough to make it's own rules; seed breeders and companies that deal in GM crops will simply skip our state, denying us the opportunity to use this important technology.

Because of Oregon's wonderful agricultural diversity-both in crops and growing methods-coexistence is key. Oregon farmers have worked with their neighbors for over 100 years managing coexistence conflicts. This bill flies in the face of that work by picking "winners" and "losers." Please vote no on HB 2739. Thank you!

Sincerely,

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