



May 23, 2017

House Committee on Rules
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 2739; GMO Patent Holder Liability

Chair Williamson and members of the committee:

The Oregon Cattlemen's Association ("OCA") is the voice of the cattle industry in Oregon. We represent over 2,000 ranchers in Oregon and aim to help grow Oregon's beef industry and promote environmentally and socially sound economic practices in producing beef products sold worldwide. Oregon has over 13,000 cattle producers, using 57% of state agricultural lands and comprising 14% of Oregon's total agricultural sector. Our ranchers are committed to producing the highest quality beef, and that of course, includes strict public health and food safety compliance.

We represent members with a wide variety of approaches and practices to growing beef. Each member determines the type of product they produce and the markets they might sell too. We fully support the use of GMO crops in feeding cattle just as we support our producers who choose not to use GMO's, raise certified organic beef, or any other sustainable, and responsible agricultural practice.

We are concerned with the unintended consequences of HB 2739. Imposing liability, and exposure to significant damages on the developers and producers of GMO products creates the potential for cost increases for feed sources that have been proven to be safe. Further, in commodity markets, our producers cannot pass these costs onto the global market, effectively driving up our costs and reducing our margins. Genetically engineered crops pose no unique risk to neighboring crops than their non-GE counterparts. For example, the presence of GE material does not affect USDA Organic status. So, as long as an organic grower takes the proper precautions as required under the USDA rules, they are at no risk of losing certification. In fact, not a single farmer has ever lost their organic certification due to the adventitious presence of GE material.

HB 2739 is unnecessary, and unfairly singles out those producers that choose to use genetically engineered products. This arbitrarily picks winners and losers in a market that already works without conflict. HB 2739 is not based on science or evidence of danger to consumers, or any past-history of between neighboring producers. Please vote "no" on HB 2739.

Jerome Rosa

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jerome Rosa'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Executive Director