

From: Steve Fisher
To: [HRULES Exhibits](#)
Subject: Please OPPOSE HB 2739 and Protect Oregon Farmers
Date: Tuesday, May 23, 2017 10:30:07 AM

Dear Chair Williamson,

Please oppose HB 2739 which would hold seed patent holders of genetically engineered (GE) crops financially responsible if a GE plant is found where it wasn't intentionally planted.

This bill is bad for Oregon farmers because coexistence has, and does work for Oregon farmers. There are markets for all types of agriculture in Oregon - organic, conventional, GE, and identity preserved. This bill elevates all other types of agriculture above GE crops. Despite what some groups claim, GE 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.

This bill also puts at risk the work of local seed breeders and university researchers. Genetic engineering is a key breeding technique for creating new crop varieties, but the liability created by this bill would greatly discourage those developments. It is important to remember that seed patent holders have no control over what the end user does with a product. So, 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.

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."

Again, the the attempt to regulate food production, and ultimately the market, through legislation will result in a system that is doomed for failure in the end. This is just as ill-fated as organic farmers complaining when traditional neighboring farms use pesticides to produce a certified weed and pest free crop. Let the research and good manufacturing practices and the market place be the final judge. Using legislation to pick the winners does not usually benefit the consumer with an economically sound, quality product.

Please support Oregon agriculture and vote NO on HB 2739

Sincerely,

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