

Testimony

Joint Committee on Carbon Reduction

HB 2020, Relating to greenhouse gas emissions; declaring an emergency

February 26, 2019

Chair Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair Representative Karin Power and Committee Members,

My name is Matt Schuster and I oppose HB 2020 as drafted. As a reference, my family is also a member of the Marion County Farm Bureau.

Our family has been raising hazelnuts in Oregon for three generations. Hazelnuts are unique to Oregon due to the mild climate and is one of the many crops that make Oregon well known in the United States, and the world. Not only Oregon's hazelnuts respected for its high quality, it is also raised in an environmentally sustainable manner.

HB 2020 will result in an immediate hardship to our farm business. The estimated fuel increases will wipe out over half of the bonuses we pay our employees. In addition, the unknown costs will be the result increased natural gas prices and the costs passed onto our business from the purchase of services, fertilizer and chemicals. This when we are facing some of the lowest prices in the last 10 years, and at the same time dealing with labor and regulatory costs rising significantly each year. The tax burden associated with HB 2020 will rob us of our capital to expand, reduce debt, expand our workforce and implement new technology.

I also worry about the unintended consequences of HB 2020. As bills like this make farming more difficult, I anticipate the consolidation of farms just to be able to afford the increased regulatory pressure and costs. My wife and I often discuss whether to encourage our children to continue farming into the fourth generation. Legislation such as HB 2020 makes that discussion even more difficult.

Once again, my name is Matt Schuster and I oppose HB 2020 as drafted. Thank you for your time and consideration of this critical issue. For more information, please contact Jonathan Sandau with Oregon Farm Bureau at sandau@oregonfb.org.