

Court Statement

Good morning Chair Dembrow and Chair Power and Committee Members,
My name is Anna Saunders and I am the future of Oregon. I am currently the FFA Snake River District President-elect. I live and work on a 4th generation family farm. I know the reality of agricultural life. I know the devastation of low crop prices and of new regulations that take more of the limited revenue generated from thousands of hours of work. I also know and respectfully question if you and your constituents understand that food does not come from grocery stores or even from trucks. It comes from farms. From honest fellow Oregonians who honestly enjoy sweating, dirt, and the smells of animals. We dedicate our lives and honor to have the freedom to work with what the climate offers from year to year. We know the power of prayer, coupled with science and even luck, are how we continue to feed the world. Each year we get more efficient using less water, growing more abundant and nutritious foods, using less inputs and even less land. We do this knowing that few people will ever understand how much we did for them. We do this with no guarantee of fair pricing and cautiously optimistic hope that our financial returns will be a little higher or at least the same as last year. Yet with all this work we cannot maintain this reliable safe cycle feeding the world with affordable food if taxes are raised to feed a government policy based on guilt.

The food to fill those grocery store shelves and restaurant menus with abundant and delicious variety come from farms throughout Oregon. The land and resources required to continue this plentiful way of life are based on fuel. This commodity is the lifeblood of modern society that fuels our farms, transports our products, and drives our vehicles. Taxing our way of life is not justice. It is not wisdom leading to a healthy future, either for me or you. The agricultural community has and always will have the best interest of the public in mind as they toil day in and day out to feed the world. This policy undermines the ability of the Oregon farmer. Our living is based on the climate more than any other sector of the economy, we care and we daily work to adapt. Taking our bread does not allow us room to eat cake, it only makes the world hungry!

Respectfully signed,

Anna Saunders