

Subject: Testimony in Support of HB 2882

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

My name is Karen Potts. I am a produce buyer/eater in Ashland, Oregon. I am writing to request your support for **HB 2882**.

HB 2882 was written to create patent holder or manufacturer liability for genetically engineered (GE) contamination events in Oregon. Over the past decade, GE contamination events, and threats of contamination, have cost U.S. farmers **billions** of dollars—including Oregon farmers—in rejected sales, lost exports, and closed agricultural markets.

Farmers lack protections from GE contamination because Oregon does not regulate GE crops. Further, with the exception of Jackson County, all Oregon counties are preempted from making decisions regarding seed cultivation in their jurisdictions, leaving a large regulatory gap.

Current legal precedent is unfavorable for farmers contaminated through no fault of their own. The legal theories of trespass, nuisance, negligence, and strict liability are not useful in GE contamination cases stemming from pollen drift. Right to Farm laws have not been useful either.

While I ultimately want to see patent holders and manufacturers held responsible for GE pollen drift contamination so farmers aren't pitted against farmers, I support legislation that calls for the regulation of GE crops in Oregon.

Addressing GE contamination is important to me but it is only part of a bigger *GE* issue. The question is should we be using *GE SEEDS* at all. At the very least those that choose to want to grow their own seeds rather than having to purchase them from a seed company, or to plant non *GMO* seeds or crops should be able to do so without fear of contamination. Or, the fear of being sued because another farmer's pollen drifted and thus not only is their crop contaminated (for sales purposes) but also that they are held responsible to the other farmer's choice to grow *GE* seeds. The farmers are now starting to understand the impact of *GMO* seeds, and the divide it is causing between farmers is very sad. The public is becoming more and more aware of this issue also, *GE* seeds are not "saving the world" as Monsanto predicted, and the heavy sprays used are in the growing of *GMO* crops are now known to cause cancer, (glyphosate for one).

Please vote HB 2882 out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation. Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Sincerely,

Karen Potts

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