

My name is Rhonda Fischer and I am a fruit farmer from Hood River County. I strongly oppose the numerous taxes on working Oregonians proposed in the -1 amendment to HB 2674. This concept is oblivious to the needs of Oregon families in 2021. Rural families, like mine, have been hit very hard by the state's response to COVID-19 and the mounting regulatory requirements for agriculture. The COVID-19 pandemic caused market disruptions which had major cash flow impacts on farmers and ranchers. And as with other sectors, many agricultural operations are currently at their breaking point.

The -1 amendment taxes our tires, farm equipment, and our off-road fuel, and it will really harm those of us in agriculture. At its core, the -1 amendment taxes rural Oregonians to pay for problems in the most urban areas of Oregon. It's fundamentally unfair to saddle farm and ranch families with the cost of retrofitting Portland's fleets or cleaning up Portland's airshed. I oppose the proposed tax on tires and off-road equipment. These are an incredible overreach.

I also oppose the proposed fuel tax on red-dyed diesel. The reason off-road fuel isn't taxed is that farm equipment isn't used on public roadways!

I know that the year-long Diesel Task Force considered many of these taxes and chose not to proceed. I respectfully ask the Committee to do the same today.

All we ask this session is that our legislators focus on resolving the issues in front of them—COVID-19 response, wildfire recovery, and building back after the devastating February ice storms. Please stop making it harder for family farms and small businesses to survive.

I ask you to vote 'NO' on the -1 amendment to HB 2674.