

To: The Senate Committee on Education
Attention: Chair Senator Michael Dembrow, Vice-Chair Senator Chuck Thomsen and Members of the Committee

My name is Lisa Spicka, and after working in the organic industry for many years (organic certification, organic farm management, organic policy work), I am happy to write you in support of SB 404-2.

So many farmers desire to transition to organic production methods, but the issue is just that-- the transition. Farmers have to balance out formidable pest and disease impacts while switching from non-organic to organic production methods. In addition to these challenges, ensuring you have a buyer who will purchase your product after taking all of that risk is an added risk. Oregon Tilth Certified Organic and Oregon State University published a fascinating study in 2017 (https://tilth.org/app/uploads/2017/03/OT_OSU_TransitionReport_03212017.pdf) that clearly outlined these and many other risks and barriers to organic transition. In my consultancy, I have worked with farmers who shy away from transition as they contemplate these barriers, even when the long-term environmental, social, and economic benefits are clear.

SB 404-2 would help provide some desperately needed resources to help farmers overcome these barriers, and ensure that Oregon can firmly establish itself as an organic agriculture leader in our nation. Please do us proud as Oregonians and support SB 404-2.

Thank you for their consideration of these comments and SB 404-2.

Lisa Spicka
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