



January 28, 2021

Chair Brad Witt
Vice-Chair Vikki Breese-Iverson
Vice-Chair Zach Hudson
House Committee on Agriculture & Natural Resources
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97031

Sent via email

Re: Support for HB 2671 (Hemp Research License)

Dear Chair Witt, Vice-Chair Breese-Iverson, Vice-Chair Hudson, and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit these comments into the record on HB 2671 on behalf of The Scotts Miracle Gro Company ("Scotts"). Scotts is the world's largest marketer of branded consumer products for lawn and garden care. Our brands are the most recognized in the industry. The company's wholly-owned subsidiary, The Hawthorne Gardening Company, is also a leading provider of nutrients, lighting, and other materials used in the hydroponic growing industry.

Since 2019, Scotts has held an Oregon Hemp Grower Registration and Oregon Hemp Grow Site License, pursuant to which we have conducted research trials for new hemp variants at our research station in Gervais, Oregon. These trials are driving innovations and creating products that will aid hemp farmers throughout Oregon and across the United States. Our research activities in Oregon focus on crop cultivation and discovering variants that improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and reliability our customers associate with our brands.

Oregon has a strong track record of supporting the hemp industry. The legislature embraced the industrial hemp pilot program granted under the 2014 Farm Bill and regularly listens to and acts on our industry's concerns. With that said, there remain significant regulatory and policy obstacles hindering our ability to innovate the future of hemp. Specifically, hemp researchers are limited to the same pre-harvest testing and destruction requirements as commercial growers. Researchers cannot collect samples from plants testing above the allowable amount of

tetrahydrocannabinol (THC). If a research trial tests "hot," the law and regulations strictly require the destruction of all plant material. For researchers in this situation, there is no way to understand the physical and chemical variables driving the high levels of concentration or improve the biochemistry to avoid the same outcome in the next trial.

Although the ideal solution would include federal legislation easing or waiving the testing requirements for hemp research (where the hemp will be grown, harvested, tested and disposed of without ever entering the stream of commerce), Oregon can provide an essential tool for researchers by allowing them to collect samples and conduct tests on plants that fail preharvest testing. HB 2671 establishes the statutory authority for the Department of Agriculture to create and issue a special license for hemp researchers that allows them to collect the samples necessary to continue conducting their research. The measure maintains the strict testing requirements for all growers, including researchers, while allowing Oregon to strengthen its role as a pioneer in the hemp industry.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. Scotts encourages your support of this measure and your continued support for our industry.

Sincerely,



Michael Diamond
Government Affairs Manager, Western U.S.
The Scotts Miracle Gro Company®