

Chair Golden and Distinguished Members of the Committee,

My name is Seth Crawford. I am the co-owner of Oregon CBD, the nation's leading supplier of specialty industrial hemp seed and the state's oldest continually operating hemp farm. I have served on the Department of Agriculture's "Hemp Rules Advisory Committee," since its inception, currently serve as chair of the OSU Hemp Seed Certification committee, and as an initial member of the Hemp Commodity Commission. My company is based in Independence and employs 25 full time staff, ranging from horticultural professionals to Ph.D. scientists. Our company is internationally respected for our breakthrough advancements in hemp breeding, genomic sequencing, seed innovations, and generosity in funding collaborative research projects with land grant universities around the US, including a \$1m gift to the OSU Global Hemp Innovation Center to fund a cannabis genomics initiative. Personally, I have provided expert testimony on cannabis policy issues to this legislative body since completing my doctoral work on the political economy of marijuana in 2013.

The task force proposed by SB1564 on cannabis-derived intoxicants and illegal cannabis production is good public policy, but already exists thanks to HB300 last session. The single greatest impediment to controlling illegal grows in Oregon is identifying licensed producers from those who are not. OLCC and ODA currently have this ability by way of existing statute.

Enacting any type of ban on hemp licenses is definitively counterproductive if the goal is to stop illegal grows; holding a hemp license grants ODA the authority to inspect a crop or facilities at any time to ensure compliance, and the agency received a very large influx of funding last session to ensure that licensed growers are adhering to the law. The overwhelming majority of illicit cannabis activity occurring in Oregon is carried out at unlicensed sites, which require a greater burden of evidence to inspect, and disincentivizes those with nefarious intentions from obtaining any license whatsoever. To reiterate, a hemp license does NOT shield a grower, it guarantees access by ODA and law enforcement.

This committee has heard testimony from a number of Oregon farmers describing hemp's mercurial growth from 2015-2019, followed by a cataclysmic collapse in 2020 and 2021. The restrictions on hemp licensing proposed by this bill will be—and I'm not exaggerating—the death-knell for hemp in our state. This will destroy all the work we have collectively undertaken in the last 8 years to build the best hemp program in the US. I urge you to not impose any restrictions on hemp licensing, which will have a paradoxically negative impact on law enforcement's ability to reign in illegal grows, and reject this unnecessary bill entirely.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Seth Crawford', written in a cursive style.

Seth Crawford, Ph.D.  
Co-Founder, Oregon CBD