

Submitter: Brenda Frketich

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources

Measure: SB199

My name is Brenda Frketich and I am a farmer from St. Paul Oregon and grow a diverse range of crops. I am against SB 199. This may seem obvious but our “factory” where we run our business and produce our products to sell; is not in an enclosed building where I can close the door and keep the rodents out to protect my business and my livelihood. We are out in the elements, and just a few of the threats to our crops include beavers and other rodents.

This bill will limit us with the few tools that we still have left by giving the power to make decisions on control in the hands of those who aren’t elected, who could be self-serving, and without the input from stakeholders like myself who are actually boots on the ground dealing with these pests.

Beavers are one rodent that we manage on our property. Their natural efforts to back up water with dams causes increasing damage on our farmland where we can’t get water to drain and can’t get crops to grow. This may seem like a small issue until these dams start to wash out roads, make culverts back up and also back up our drain tiles for our fields. This then very quickly becomes a very costly endeavor on our farm. There is no shortage of beavers in this state, they can be managed on site by landowners without having to relocate them, to just continue the headache for other land owners.

Often times these areas where beavers are working are undetected for some time due to the nature of where can access throughout the year on our property, so when you do find them the time to fix the problem and remedy the situation can’t be put off for months while waiting for a commission to decide if the damage on our land is “enough” to allow for us to take the animal, or better yet wait for someone to show up and try to live trap this animal just to turn it loose to be a pain to another landowner. Another pest that comes to mind, a very small rodent that makes its home in many of our fields. Just a few years ago we had a large increase in the population of voles, commonly referred to as field mice. In one growing season, these little critters destroyed many of our fields, one in particular lost 800 pounds of grass seed per acre. 40% of our field disappearing before we could harvest. I know some fields that were a total loss that year. These rodents can be destructive and cost us dearly from year to year despite our best efforts.

This bill is an overreach of power that will be given to the wrong people and removes the voice of those of us who are actually working with and living with these creatures. There have been a number of bills in the past few years to limit our taking of beaver specifically. Bills that have not passed because of many of the reasons that I listed above. I truly believe that while this bill looks like one that will help control the taking of predators and rodents like beaver, I think it’s just a way for special interests to circumvent the legislative process and have the control they want without having to

come to the table to discuss with all stakeholders. It's a way to get their way without going through the correct channels because that hasn't worked. I urge you to see through this special interest power play for what it is; a tool to yet again take away our voice, and vote no on this bill. Thank you.