

Submitter: Shelly Boshart Davis
On Behalf Of: House District 15
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources
Measure: SB789

My name is Shelly Boshart Davis, and I am the state Representative for District 15. Growing up as part of a family farm, I understand the value of crop rotations. As I have learned more about canola as a rotation for the wheat and grass seed commonly grown in our Valley, I am impressed with its potential to play a significant role not only in helping individual farms that raise it, but also the entire local food systems that would benefit - e.g. the dairies that could utilize the high protein by-product "meal" once oil is extracted to help produce the milk & dairy products we all love. Or the chicken farmers, all the way from backyard weekenders to those with full time operations producing both meat birds and eggs that have canola oil and meal mixed into their feed rations. The crop could be grown local, processed local, and utilized local - hows that for lowering carbon footprints???

Through the years in this building, legislators have taken and continue to take many tools from farmers. Canola is a tool that growers can use to break weed and disease cycles in the other grass and grain species commonly grown in the Willamette Valley. It has been dubbed nature's subsoiler for its beneficial ability to break through compacted soil layers with its powerful taproot. It generates necessary cashflow in an area largely based on contracted crops, which may be paid for anywhere between 2 months to 2 years after they are harvested (largely dictated by the contracting companies), versus the mandated 30 day payment of canola following sale & delivery. We need to stop taking beneficial tools away from farmers, including their choice to plant canola by imposing a permanent arbitrary 500 acre cap.

Let's give farmers some credit for their ability to come together and work issues out. If government had instead stayed out of it in 2005 when the first ODA administrative rule hearing was held to prohibited canola in the Willamette Valley Protected District, I guarantee growers would have worked together to achieve necessary isolations to allow all brassica production to be successful. Let's NOT continue to be in the way by moving this bill. Please oppose SB 789.

Thank you,
Shelly Boshart Davis
State Representative
House District 15