

Dear Chair Helm and Committee Members:

It is important to maintain protections for high-value seed crops in the Willamette Valley. The seed industry is a major economic powerhouse in the region, worth more than \$24M per year and providing over 90% of the world's brassica seeds for some varieties. Rolling back these protections would create an unpredictable and unstable environment for seed growers, which is bad for business. As an Oregonian the long term health and longevity of the states environment and economy are very important to me.

Allowing the growth of rapeseed/canola in the protected zone could lead to cross-contamination and pest spread, which would be disastrous for the seed industry. Once contamination happens, the affected seed cannot be sold on the global market, and we could lose precious seed varieties that have been cultivated for generations.

That's why we need to extend the protections indefinitely and protect what's good. SB789 is a wise extension of the current policy, enshrining the current protections and collaborative system in state law. It's a crucial step to ensure that the Willamette Valley remains one of the vegetable seed capitals of the world and a very special place for growing high-value seeds.

If you care about protecting the seed industry in the Willamette Valley, maintaining stability and profitability, and safeguarding the diverse seed varieties that growers all over the world depend on, I strongly urge you to vote YES on SB 789.
Sincerely,

Bernardo Pantoja
A concerned Oregonian