

Submitter: Brynn Richardson

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and  
Water

Measure: SB789

Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and members of the Committee, for the record my name is Brynn Richardson. I currently reside in Eugene. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of SB 789, which maintains current protections for the Willamette Valley's lucrative brassica vegetable seed industry. I currently work in School Nutrition and would like to speak towards the availability and continued support of farms producing crops that play an active role in feeding the children of our community instead of commercial interests. Our ability to support our local farmers will be greatly diminished with the reduction in protections for our farmers. That hurts farmers and it hurts our children's health.

Farmers and producers up and down the Valley support this legislation, and strongly. The truth is, SB789 continues status-quo protections and cooperative pinning arrangements, which are essential to maintain our vibrant seed economy, provide regulatory certainty, and ensure that high-value seed farms are not damaged because a small number of people want to grow canola.

The most important thing to know is that Oregon is at a crossroads: we can either continue practical protections for Willamette Valley specialty seed growers, whose brassica seed business alone is worth \$24M per year, or we can cave to special interests bent on growing a very low-value oilseed that is no longer even processed in Oregon. The choice is clear. Growers around the state, as well as leading experts, know canola is a problem not only because it brings increased pests, disease and possible GE to other brassica crops, but because those who grow it have little to no incentive to manage it closely. The problem is not just with the plant, but with how it is handled, harvested, and transported.

Keeping our current protections just make sense, and I strongly urge you to pass SB789 to maintain our vibrant farm economy in the Willamette Valley.

Thank you for your time,  
Brynn Richardson