



OREGON
FARM
BUREAU

Locally Grown
and
GROWING STRONG

Testimony on HB 4049

Oregon Farm Bureau Federation

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, & Water

February 8, 2024

Chair Helm, Vice Chair Owens and Hartman and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Farm Bureau Federation (OFB) appreciates the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of our nearly 6,600 family farm and ranch members across the state of Oregon. Our members produce over 220 commodities found in Oregon and incorporate varying agricultural techniques and management practices in the cultivation of Oregon's agricultural lands. OFB supports the intent behind HB 4049 and the -2 amendments.

Producers work in partnership with publicly owned wastewater treatment and stormwater management utilities to receive biosolids to be applied to agricultural lands. This application of biosolids on agricultural lands is a cooperative partnership with agricultural producers that has long been regarded in Oregon as a preferred sustainable management practice.

There have been rising concerns related to Per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) and their presence in biosolids and their interaction with lands that have biosolids applied to them. However, to date, there have not been studies that indicate PFAS contamination levels in Oregon are cause for immediate statewide action. HB 4049, with the -2 amendments, lays out the parameters and funds a study on PFAS by Oregon State University Soil and Agricultural science.

The -2 amendment will clarify intent around data confidentiality and that only fields that do not produce crops intended for human consumption will be studied. OFB appreciates that the amendments will protect the confidentiality of the volunteer participants and has taken into consideration the feedback of agriculture and OSU in formulating the study. It is our hope that the bill sponsors continue to work with any agricultural group that remains uncomfortable with the language in HB 4049 and the proposed amendments.

Oregon Farm Bureau looks forward to continuing to engage with the legislature on issues that protect agricultural production in our state, and the development of Oregon specific science-based information prior to legislating issues that will directly impact our producers. Thank you for your time.

Please email lauren@oregonfb.org with any questions related to these comments.