

Dear Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Owens and Hartman, and members of the committee:

My name is Lois Hawk and I am a small farmer near Harrisburg, OR, Linn County. I am writing to you to express support for HB 4059-7. I strongly oppose HB 4059-8.

I care about seed farming in the Willamette Valley Protected District because it enables small acreage farms, like mine, to be profitable and it provides seeds that may help feed everyone as climate change continues. These specialty crops serve people and ensure a food supply in uncertain times.

These GMO brassicas escape fields into adjacent properties, they are spilled during transit and grow along our county roadways—scattering the resulting seeds to the wind. When these seeds cross with non-GMO by accident, the resulting plants are almost impossible to eradicate when they appear in my crop fields. They behave as a three-season annual: able to germinate and grow during our mild winters and produce seeds through three seasons. Hand-eradication of them is a losing proposition—I've tried it. Chemical sprays are required to eradicate them, which prevents me from attaining organic-certification for my fields, adding more value to my farm.

The property values of small farms depend on the ability to produce crops that are profitable and our success farming makes strong rural communities. If small farms start to fail, it opens the door for changes to the EFU (Exclusive Farm Usage) land designation that will end the Rural Oregon that we all love and enjoy.

I urge you to remember that Oregon's seed growers enable:

- healthy rural economies and small towns
- national food security through fruit and vegetable seed production
- soil and water quality preservation through the limited use of chemicals—to preserve and maintain a vibrant and productive microbiomes in the soil—keeping it alive and highly productive.
- a diversified rural agriculture that helps our communities weather droughts and other challenges

REJECT HB 4059 it is not in the interest of Linn County Specialty Crop farmers and its residents that deserve a good resilient economy.

Sincerely,

Lois Hawk

