

2/15/23

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

My name is Sebastian Aguilar and I am a specialty seed farmer in Dayton, OR. Specialty Brassica seed growing in the Willamette Valley is a vital part of our farm ecosystem here in Oregon and an important part of my own business. I am writing to you to express support on HB 4059-7 and 4059-9. I strongly oppose HB 4059-8.

I care about seed farming in the Willamette Valley Protected District because it has been a key aspect of my business for the past 12 years and I would like to be able to continue it without the unnecessary challenges canola would impose on our industry. For years, the Willamette Valley Brassica seed industry has been protected from canola and for good reason... it is an important, valuable industry that plays a key role in our global food system. That role will be threatened by introducing more canola, especially if it is not required to play by the same self-imposed rules that other brassica growers have wisely put into place. I hate to see the short-term desires of a few seek to override the long-term cooperative work of many.

I am grateful for the work of the committee, the named isolation districts and the limitation of GE canola in the WVPD. We urge you to remember what Oregon's seed growers bring to the table through the farming they enable, the rural economies their farms participate in, the crucial knowledge they hold and the need for food security through seed security. This proposal already represents a huge compromise for the seed growers and we cannot afford to lose any more ground. When you consider HB 4059, please listen to the guidance of specialty seed growers and support the strongest possible option for Oregon.

Sincerely,

Sebastian Aguilar

Chickadee Farm

Dayton, OR

