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Oregon State Legislature
Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Senate

Subject: Opposition to SB 747

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to SB 747, a deeply flawed and costly proposal that fails to address the complexities of fertilizer use and groundwater quality in Oregon.

As a farmer, fertilizer is one of the most expensive inputs I endure and its costs have skyrocketed in recent years. There is no incentive for me, as a producer, to apply more than necessary—both economically and agronomically, efficiency is key. Furthermore, I am a steward of the land and have been for six generations. I will not harm that which provides for me, my family or my global customers. Fertilizer application is not a one-size-fits-all equation; it varies widely based on soil type, crop and crop rotation, weather patterns, and a host of other factors. Simply tracking application rates does not equate to identifying overuse, nor does it account for the complex variables influencing nutrient uptake. As a farmer, I complete a soils analysis annually and consult with my local agronomist before any fertilizer application to ensure that I am only applying what is absolutely necessary for the growth of the plant. Large-scale fertilizer application is a science, guided by research, soil testing, and careful management. It would be interesting to compare the education and planning I invest in a single growing season to the approach of homeowners applying fertilizer from a big-box store like Home Depot.

SB 747 proposes a multi-million dollar program that would not provide the meaningful data suggested in the bill language. It does not reflect the science of crop nutrition, nor does it offer a sound approach to addressing groundwater contamination. Instead, it represents a costly bureaucratic overreach with little practical benefit.

This issue warrants a thorough, collaborative discussion with producers, agronomists, and industry experts at the helm—individuals who work directly with soil health and nutrient management with the education and experience to go with it. Instead, this bill has been crafted in a vacuum by urban legislators with no working knowledge of agriculture. The result is a policy that demonstrates a fundamental misunderstanding of both crop production and groundwater dynamics.

SB 747 is simply bad policy. I urge you to reject this misguided proposal and engage in meaningful discussions with those who understand- AND LIVE- the real challenges and best practices of modern agriculture. I welcome any legislator to visit my large-scale wheat farm at any time. See firsthand how bills like this impact real-world agriculture. Better yet, sit down with me for a conversation about the realities of production farming and the challenges I face.

Sincerely,

Erin Hansell-Heideman
Owner/Operator
Blown Away Ranch (*Gilliam & Morrow Counties*)
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