



STATE OF WASHINGTON

NOXIOUS WEED CONTROL BOARD

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February 21, 2013

Dear Senator Edwards, Representative Unger, and members of the Joints Way and Means Committee:

The Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board (WSNWCB) respectfully requests that you not support the Governor's proposed \$523,000 reduction to the Oregon Department of Agriculture's Noxious Weed Program and ensure that the program is sufficiently funded. Noxious weeds have serious economic impacts. A 2000 study indicated that noxious weeds reduced personal income in Oregon by an estimated \$83 million, and that the loss in agricultural production caused by these weeds could eliminate an estimated 3,000 jobs per year. It's always difficult to put a price tag on actual money saved by the on-the-ground weed control efforts, but the benefits of those efforts are very real.

We fully understand how difficult the economic climate is and that reductions must be made. The WSNWCB has already experienced a substantial reduction to our operating budget and, as a result, have had to scale back some of our work. Some of our county noxious weed control boards have also experienced similar budgetary reductions; however, over the past years, several have seen their budgets increase, as their local governments recognize the importance and cost-savings of strong noxious weed control programs in their counties.

A sufficiently funded statewide noxious weed program in Oregon is crucial to Oregonians and also important to Washington State. We are all aware that weeds know no boundaries and both states must do our part to prevent noxious weeds from spreading past our borders. We ask that you continue to fund ODA's Noxious Weed Program so that it can continue its great work.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to present this testimony.

Anthony Stadelman, Chairman
Washington State Noxious Weed Control Board