

Most Honorable Senator Alan C. Bates
900 Court Street NE, S-205
Salem, OR 97301

Re: SB 633 (HB 3192)

This bill would be disastrous to the economic conditions of our state.

Many of our valleys have small farmers growing diverse crops from seeds of many sources. Their foods are in international demand by restaurants and individual consumers. The crops get good prices, and have done better in drought conditions.

Meanwhile, the Midwest, dominated by the engineered seeds of a few corporations, now have farmers in deep economic trouble, in spite of their crops being highly taxpayer-subsidized and largely tailored to biofuels instead of food. Their crops now have no market in Europe. Yields have begun to fail, as the seed's promise of less weeds, pests, and root-worm has instead produced poison-resistant weeds, pests and root-worm. Soil fertility has been compromised by the necessity of applying more pesticides and more toxic herbicides each year, increasing costs and risks to consumers, workers, their surroundings and themselves. The excess herbicides kill earthworms and other soil-enriching organisms, compacting the soil and decreasing its ability to absorb water. This has contributed to the Midwest years-long drought conditions.

But they have no choice but to continue to plant seeds from these few international corporations, because these are the only seeds locally available, and the farmers have to sign a contract that they cannot save seeds from any plants with good yields. Plants from on-line sources are very likely to get cross-pollinated by these dominant, patented seeds, and farmers are regularly sued, and forced to bankruptcy, for patent-infringement once these crops have likely cross-pollinated.

This state is one of the few left in the United States where farmers can get quality seeds from competing sources. They can save seeds from good-yielding plants. Please retain local competition, and ensure that a few international corporations, which can sell inferior products just because they have the market saturation and the political clout, will not dominate our agriculture.

These diverse crops need local control and local protection from cross-pollination when our local farmers feel it is necessary. Oppose SB 633 and any similar bills.

Sincerely,



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