

Re: House Bill 2813
Tuesday 19 March 2013

Attention: House Committee on Energy and Environment

Greetings:

I am writing to express my support for HB2813, a bill banning the planting, growth, and harvesting of Giant Cane (*Arundo donax*) in Oregon.

I am the director of the Oregon Flora Project, an effort to provide information about the ~4,500 vascular plants that grow in our state (<http://oregonflora.org>). We perform scholarly research to identify and document each species that grows without cultivation. We also document which species are non-native to Oregon, and their characteristics (e.g., found on ballast, escaped from cultivation, invasive, etc.).

Currently we do not observe Giant Cane as a part of our state flora. To allow this plant to be cultivated as a biofuel would make it very highly likely that it would escape from cultivation and establish itself in diverse habitats. Giant Cane is an aggressively growing member of the grass family, which can propagate easily from stem or rhizome segments. When it establishes, it chokes out the pre-existing native vegetation and the associated community of insects, birds, and other wildlife. There are negative economic implications as well, as recreation, fisheries, water transport, irrigation, and land values deteriorate in response to the ecological degradation caused by Giant Cane escaping from cultivation.

The very claims supporting the use of *Arundo donax* as a biofuel—its rapid growth and tolerance of different habitats—are the same reasons to prohibit its introduction into Oregon. The opportunity now exists to keep this very invasive species out of our state, and avoiding the ecological and economic disaster that would most certainly ensue. Prohibiting its cultivation as a commercial agricultural or horticultural crop is the best way to ensure that Giant Cane will not become an unwanted part of our Oregon plant life. I encourage your support of HB2813.

With sincere thanks for your attention,

Linda K. Hardison, Ph.D.
Director, Oregon Flora Project
27043 Forest Springs Lane
Corvallis, OR 97330