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Hello, my name is Marie Bowers. I am here in opposition of HB 4100 and mandatory labels on genetically engineered products.

I am a fifth generation farmer in Harrisburg, Oregon. On our farm we grow grass seed, wheat, meadowfoam and this year, hopefully, turnip seed. If the slugs haven't ate them all.

Most everything I grow is a food crop. The grass seed feeds sheep and cattle locally, nationwide and internationally. We pasture our fields with sheep all winter long. The wheat goes into noodles. The meadowfoam is unique, the seed is crushed for the oil in cosmetics, and the meal or left over stuff is then used as cattle feed. There is also the delicious honey from the bees that pollinate the meadowfoam.

We are constantly trying to expand the diversity of the farm. We try new methods, crops and technology to find what fits and makes sense for our farm. However we are often limited by soil and climate of the area

Farmers have many different tools and methods they can utilize to produce safe and abundant food. Genetic engineering is one of these tools. No one makes you use one method or another it is all about choice and diversity.

Diversity is a beautiful thing, particularly in Oregon agriculture. That's what allows Oregon farmers to grow over 230 commodities in this state. The different methods, markets and technologies all work together for Oregon Agriculture and ultimately benefit the state's economy.

The proponents of this bill ultimately do not support diversity. They would like to see GE crops disappear entirely, no matter the cost, the cost to family farmers and the cost to family shoppers.

The late President John F. Kennedy once said, "The farmer is the only man in our economy who buys everything at retail, sells everything at wholesale, and pays the freight both ways."

Labeling Genetically Engineered products are costly. The cost will passed down to the farmer. There are costs to the implementation and enforcement of the regulations. Someone needs to pay for that.