

Dean Senate Committee:

I am writing to urge you to oppose HB 2509. This bill would put Monsanto's mantra that GMO growers and farmers raising traditional and organic crops can "co-exist" into state law while ignoring the billions in economic damage that GMOs have already caused to other non-GMO farmers, but that's not the worst of it.

There are at least 4 big problems with HB 2509:

1. **Forced mediation.** HB 2509 would effectively **force farmers whose crops were contaminated by GMOs into a vague "mediation process"** orchestrated by the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture (ODA) before a farmer could go to court to sue to try to stop GMO contamination. Farmers can already use mediation if it make sense, but they should not be forced into a biased "mediation" process controlled by staunch GMO supporters at the ODA.
2. **Liability for farmers contaminated by GMOs.** If a farmer refused to mediate, HB 2509 says they could be liable for hundreds of thousands of dollars in a GMO-grower's attorney's fees in a related court case. AND **if Monsanto or their ilk joined the case, the farmer could even be liable for their attorney fees.**
3. **Pro-GMO mediators.** HB 2509's mediation process would be orchestrated by the State agency that has done more to defend GMOs than any other: the Oregon Dept. of Agriculture (ODA). ODA could then create a costly and time consuming mediation process that would make it harder for farmers to protect themselves against GMO contamination.
4. **Funding for OSU propaganda.** The bill would also direct propaganda funding to OSU for "educational materials and information regarding the coexistent use of agricultural lands." The bill would put OSU, which has a long history of promoting GMOs, in the position of using Monsanto's talking points that GMOs can "co-exist" with organic and other non-GMO crops despite the dramatic contamination events and billions in damage that GMOs continue to cause to non-GMO crops.

Thank you for your strong consideration.

Sincerely,

A. Todd

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