

Trant Lindsay

From: Mary Alionis <Mary@whistlingduckfarm.com>
Sent: Wednesday, May 20, 2015 1:25 PM
To: Reiley Beth
Cc: Sen Dembrow; Sen Edwards C; Sen Prozanski; Sen Olsen; Sen Thomsen
Subject: RE: Opposition to HB 2509

Dear esteemed Senators,

I am writing with regard to HB 2509, and to voice our opposition.

My husband Vince and I own Whistling Duck Farm LLC in Josephine county, a certified organic farm we started in 1991. We are one of the largest organic farms in Southern Oregon and GMO contamination is a very real threat to our operation. We sell produce and save seeds from crops that are at risk of contamination. Therefore we are very much opposed to legislation that is based on the false premise of coexistence.

This bill would force farmers into mediation on a completely uneven playing field, likely up against farms backed by special interests both in the ODA and the GMO industry. Both interests have already, repeatedly, shown their willingness to overrun farmers that oppose them, their products or their practices. This would be more of the same, under the guise of evenness and fair play. If a farm refuses such likely unbalanced mediation or its outcome, they will have the threat of paying for the their opposition's legal fees if taken to court. No farm can afford such an outcome, especially when up against the biggest players in agriculture. Mediation is not held to the same standard as a court of law and should not be viewed as equal justice to someone that has been wronged.

Most importantly, we feel this bill would set a dangerous precedent by codifying the implication that coexistence is possible, when experience and science shows this to not be the case. With many GMO crops, once contamination of an area or farm has occurred, it cannot be undone. To imply otherwise, and to base this and future laws on that implication, is ethically and legally suspect. Additionally, to provide funding to promote such an approach within the OSU program is also inappropriate, blatantly bending to the will of the corporate checkbook that funds many OSU programs and research. It is quite obvious that the ODA is very much beholden to and complicit with the GMO industry, as is their OSU program. To define them as a neutral entity with regards to GMOs is false.

Please vote against HB 2509. It is unfair, unjust and sets a dangerous precedent.

Sincerely,

Mary and Vince Alionis
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