

January 31, 2016

Submitted as public testimony Regarding HB4014

TO: Measure 91 Joint Committee and Oregon State Legislators

I request state legislators remove the definition in HB3400 of marijuana as an agricultural farm crop.

I am opposed to removing the 2 year residency requirement in HB4014.

I moved to rural Central Oregon to appreciate the beauty, dark skies, and quiet agricultural setting. My family has invested our life savings into a property and we are restoring it as wildlife habitat. With the great increase in Medical Marijuana Grow sites in our neighborhood just in the last 8 months, those desirable qualities of rural life have all but disappeared. I now have views of ugly huge greenhouses, lit up 24 hours a day (no views of stars), smells worse than skunk spray, blasting rock music, cars speeding by, and trespassers on our property. I do not feel safe on my own property.

As our Oregon State Legislators, in House Bill 3400, you decided pot was a farm crop without putting that decision to voters and without hearing opinions from property owners affected by issues related to large pot grows on farmlands. HB3400 was signed by Governor Kate Brown on June 30, 2015.

Now defined as a "crop," marijuana enjoys protections from Oregon's Right to Farm (RTF) law and therefore can be grown in Exclusive Farm Use (EFU) zones, but was this really the intention of this farming regulation?

The Right to Farm policy, adopted by Oregon's legislature in 1973, protects farmland as a natural and economic asset, and preserves a maximum amount of large parcels of agricultural lands to assure adequate, healthful and nutritious food. The policy provides incentives and privileges to land owners in EFU areas because the zoning limits alternative land uses. Under RTF, ranchers are protected from lawsuits against noises, smells, dust, and other issues associated with farming.

It is so obvious that pot is not a farm crop! Any rational person would agree that a product requiring 8-foot fences topped with razor-wire, needs high-level security systems with cameras, has odor smelled ½ mile away, sells for \$2,500 a pound and is a cash-based business is NOT grown in a reasonable manner. Pot is not a healthful and nutritious food. Marijuana is still a Schedule 1 Federally controlled substance, not a farm crop!

There is no justifiable reason to lift a 2-year residency requirement for MJ growers and continue to open up the door to out-of-state drug cartels. We already have over 1,730 medical MJ grows in Deschutes County – we have plenty of in-state residents who want to go into business. Removing the 2-year residency requirement basically invites outside large-scale investors to move in and ruin our quality of life in rural Oregon. The current growers for the most part are NOT good neighbors. It is obvious outsiders will have no interest in protecting what we long-time residents came here to appreciate and preserve – quality of life in a healthy, safe setting.

I am angry, alarmed and disheartened that our legislators are kowtowing to the marijuana industry and have abandoned their constituents who have trusted them to protect our public safety, quality of life, and property values.

Perhaps if this large greenhouse with the noise, odor, traffic, loud music, and removal of night skies were located next to your home, it might bring to life the message we are sending, these commercial marijuana facilities do not belong in the middle of our rural residential farming communities.

I am opposed to removing the 2 year residency in HB4014 and ask that you remove the designation of marijuana as a farm crop from HB3400.

Sincerely,

Krista Knoernschild
Deschutes County
Tumalo, Oregon

AS REFERENCE PHOTO'S LISTED BELOW



On 20 acre parcel, greenhouse is 35' from property line, neighboring existing house was already located <150' to same property line



New gas tank is at property line



Another site - lights are on 24 / 7