

Bobbi Harrold Frost

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HB 4041 Testimony

To the Chair and members of the Committee, my name is Bobbi Harrold Frost. I am a 4th generation family farmer from Creswell, in Lane County. My family has been living and working on the same farm since 1946 and in just a few short weeks, my husband and I will be welcoming the 5th generation of farmer into our family operation. Our farm has been producing fresh, local milk every single day for the last 70 years.

I am writing today to express my dissatisfaction with HB 4041. The production of crops is vital to our business and the ability to remain profitable. Each year we raise about 1000 acres of corn, grass and grain to feed our animals. Simply having to buy just the corn silage portion of our feed on the open market would cost our small farm about \$300,000 a year. Growing the crop ourselves takes away 2/3 of that cost and allows us more control over the quality of feed we can provide to our animals.

Because of the fuel and pesticide cost savings they provide, we like to have the option to grow Genetically Engineered crops. Using a GE corn silage seed, we are actually able to reduce our pesticide application by 75%. In addition to the peace of mind and savings that creates, it also saves us serious time and fuel. Each pesticide application requires the time and diesel to pass over the field, and many pesticides must be worked into the soil, creating more potential for erosion. The ability to use a GE seed when needed helps us to grow higher quality feed with fewer inputs, in farming, that's a win.

HB 4041 could potentially take away that choice from our farm and countless others like it. For many farms, including ours, the added costs from being forced to grow conventional seed could make the difference in being able to farm at all.

Supporters of HB 4041 would have you believe that it protects those farmers whose crops are at risk for damage from cross pollination. For as long as there have been crops of any kind growing in Oregon, there has been potential for cross pollination. Sweet corn and field corn growers have been working together for decades to stagger plantings and eliminate the risk of the cross pollination to both crops. Simple, honest communication is all it takes to keep everyone's crop safe. Farmers everywhere in Oregon, regardless of their size, understand this and work together to do what's best for everyone.

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HB 4041 would create a massive legal snarl that would only serve to entangle and confuse farmers throughout the state. Having a state-wide level playing field allows every Oregon farmer the chance to prosper, regardless of location. Farming is a hard enough job even when you aren't trying to keep track of all the legal fluctuations between counties. Many farms span multiple locations and counties, creating even more confusion at the farm-level if this bill were passed.

Our family farm, and many others like it, respectfully request that you consider the amount of legal snarl and confusion that HB 4041 would create for Oregon Farmers. Please help us keep the rules fair and simple for all Oregon Farmers, and give each of us a chance to succeed, do not pass HB 4041.