



COMMISSIONER

FROM THE DESK OF CRAIG POPE

February 4, 2016

House Committee on Consumer Protection and Government Effectiveness

Re: HB 4041

HB 4041 and a potential companion bill seek to undo hundreds of hours of public engagement and financial investment in the success of passing SB 863 in 2013. SB 863 was designed to protect the natural resources economy of Oregon by avoiding a patchwork of governance across the state that would require county governments to administer ordinances that would jeopardize Oregon Right to Farm protections as well as substantial economies that provide the life blood to those counties.

SB 863, though imperfect in the eyes of many, provides clear direction to the state of Oregon and her 36 counties regarding the regulatory responsibility of ag and timber seed products. Removing the words *products of agricultural seed, flower seed, nursery seed or vegetable seed* clearly undermines the intent of SB 863 and leaves a large gap in the law that provided the exemption of local governments it was designed to protect.

I continue to stand behind statements I have made in this issue from 2013, supported by my peers across the state through Association of Oregon Counties *that counties have neither the technical expertise nor the capacity to enforce agricultural seed regulations or regulations pertaining to products of agricultural seed.*

In Oregon's "shared services" system of governance there is a careful balance between services regulated and delivered at the county level, those provided by the State, and those that are shared. SB 863 and ORS 633.738 maintains that balance. I urge you to oppose this bill and encourage a more timely and thoughtful process to be considered for amending a law as substantial or impactful as this one.

Craig Pope
Polk County Commissioner