

Submitted Testimony for HB 4122

Chair Fagan and Committee,

Thank you for your time to read through this submitted testimony.

My family farm bales approximately 22,000 acres of grass straw from Woodburn to Junction City and everywhere in between. This would include the counties of Linn, Lane, Marion, Benton, Polk, Clackamas, Yamhill, maybe more. We have 11 balers, along with hay rakes, bale stackers, hay squeeze loaders, and 36 semi-trucks, that will travel throughout these multiple counties during a 6-8 week period of what we call "harvest." I would have to sit down and try and map out all the city boundaries we might go in and out of either while baling fields, or traveling to/from fields. Our main office, farm and mechanic shop is in Tangent, Linn County; but we also have our haypress that containerizes this grass straw in Salem, Marion County. We have 12 barns located throughout the Willamette Valley. After we press the grass straw in Salem, Marion County, we haul it to the Ports of Tacoma and Seattle along Interstate-5, traveling through many cities and counties in order to get to Washington. We haul alfalfa from southern Oregon in multiple counties as well as Eastern Oregon near Silver Lake and Christmas Valley. The drive in our semi-trucks hauling Alfalfa would take us through multiple different cities and counties. Our trucks also haul wheat, grass seed, and other "products of seed" and agricultural products along Interstate 84 to areas like Hermiston in the northeastern part of Oregon. All in all, our trucking company, farm and baling operation travels through most counties and many cities in Oregon.

At this point, you can probably understand my concerns with this bill, or any bill that lifts the seed preemption status, and puts governing on the local municipalities. While this bill, HB 4122, specifically names GE, this undermines the seed preemption law put into effect a few years ago. This could open the floodgates to more and more regulation and requirements at the "local" level. My explanation for my small business above should show just how reckless a law like this would be for small business!

We employ 48 people through our agri-businesses and farms. We deal with so many regulations already: We are inundated with FMCSA (Federal Motor Carriers Safety Administration) rules, CDL requirements, road restrictions, weight restrictions, height restrictions, load securement, bridge restrictions, insurance requirements, emissions controls, port/terminal requirements, drug testing, DMV, licensing, safety standards, driver qualifications, medical standards, new FMSA (Food Modernization Safety Administration), and the list goes on – that's just the trucking specific side of things and I'm sure I didn't cover all of it... The "business" of trucking adds on a whole new list of regulations and red tape. To add the burden of rulemaking as such in HB 4122 at a local level is irresponsible at best. The funding to do something like this and give it the justice it deserves, and scientific knowledge just isn't there. This is why we have the ODA, the USDA, the EPA, etc...

Please do not lift the seed preemption, please do not make local cities and counties responsible for my farm and company's ability to do business in this great state. The grass straw export market brings in millions of dollars into Oregon, providing many jobs, and money to local farmers and businesses. This law – and those like it – could categorically change the feasibility of this market. We have huge international variables already to deal with – the strength of the dollar, losing Terminal 6 at the Port of Portland, a decreasing population in Japan, etc... The Oregon Legislature would be remiss to mandate such an irresponsible hardship on local communities and local business. I ask you to vote no on HB 4122.

Thank you for your time.

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