

Bobbi Harrold Frost

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### HB 4122 Testimony

To the Chair and members of the Committee, my name is Bobbi Harrold Frost. I am a 4<sup>th</sup> 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 5<sup>th</sup> 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 4122. The production of crops of all kinds, including those with genetic modification, 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.

Often, we make the choice to grow a GE corn for silage. Corn silage is made by harvesting the entire corn plant, from stalk to ear, chopping it into small pieces and fermenting it. Planting a GE corn seed means we are able to reduce the amount of herbicide and pesticides we apply by 75%. It also saves us a great deal of time, money and fuel. Many common corn herbicides require multiple applications that must be worked into the soil. A GE seed requires only one application of herbicide and it can be applied while the plant is growing. This means that instead of the diesel, time and erosion that it would cost a field to have herbicide tilled in prior to or after plantings, we are instead able to make a single application. In addition to all of the fuel savings, the GE seed is naturally pest resistant, completely eliminating a whole different set of pesticide applications.

HB 4122 would take these savings and increases in efficiency 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 4122 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.

HB 4122 would put Oregon farmers at a distinct competitive disadvantage. In the Dairy industry especially, the ability to grow your own feed and do so in a cost effective manner is the difference between being in business and being bankrupt. Without the ability to control your inputs you cannot be profitable, even at higher milk prices than we are seeing now. Taking away the ability to grow GE crops would be a death sentence to our farm, and many of the hundreds of other small farms in Oregon. Oregon is the land of the small family farmer, and every time we pass legislation like HB4122 we take away another chance for farm families like mine. We have been in business 70 years and four generations, it seems rather cruel that the story of our farm could come to an end solely because of a bill like this one. Please stand with family farmers like mine and do not pass HB 4122