



March 16, 2017

Attn: Representative Brian Clem, Chair
House Committee on Consume Protection
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Re: HB 4122; Local Authority on Seed Regulation

Dear Chair Clem and members of the committee:

The Oregon Cattlemen's Association ("OCA") is the voice of the cattle industry in Oregon. We represent ranchers throughout Oregon and aim to help grow Oregon's beef industry and promote environmentally and socially sound economic practices. Oregon has over 13,000 cattle producers, using 57% of state agricultural lands and comprising 14% of Oregon's total agricultural sector. Consistent, reasonable and thoughtful regulation to the crops our cattle consume is critical in ensuring Oregon beef reaches tables across the globe safely and efficiently.

OCA is concerned with allowing local governments to regulate the use and location of any type of crops. HB 2469 could create patchwork of regulations across the state and wreak havoc on the ability of landowners to raise crops for feed and other agricultural purposes. Given the budgetary constraints on our local governments, we are concerned at the level of analysis and scientific scrutiny such regulations may have before enactment. The seed and other products we use to feed cattle, as well as the beef we produce, are currently regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Environmental Protection Agency, all of which have the needed expertise and scientific data to make informed decisions on safety. Allowing local governments to make decisions inhibiting the use of seeds opens the door to politics over policy, and fear-mongering related to particular crops or plants.

This potential patchwork of local regulations will unduly burden producers on an individual level. Livestock and dairy producers determine which crops to plant based on what they need to feed their herds a nutritious, balanced diet. It is not uncommon for graze land and pastures to span across multiple county and city jurisdictions. Giving the power to inhibit certain crops within limited areas regulations, will force growers to contend with multiple regulations across their properties or purchase more expensive alternative forage products for an entire operation just to comply with a local limitation or regulation.

If passed, HB 2469 will subject livestock producers to unnecessary risk, and a statewide patchwork of regulations, potentially driving up the costs of producing beef and driving up their prices to Oregonians. Oregon's cattle ranchers are already facing a difficult competitive landscape both domestically and globally, and ask the legislature to carefully consider any additional burdens. We ask you to oppose HB 2469.

Thank you,

Jerome Rosa, Executive Director