



KIRSCH

Family Farms, Inc.

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March 22, 2017

Re: Senate Bill 500

Senate Committee on Environmental and Natural Resources

Chairman Dembrow, Vice Chairman Olsen and Committee:

My name is Brenda Frketich and I'm the owner of Kirsch Family Farms, in St. Paul, Oregon. I am the third generation on my family's sustainable farm, where we grow wheat, vegetables, vegetables seeds, hazelnuts, grass seed, and clover. I farm alongside my husband and our two sons.

I am writing today in opposition to Senate Bill 500, which removes the requirement that a timely report be sent to the Oregon Department of Agriculture after an alleged misapplication of pesticides. Currently Oregon law requires a landowner who believes they've been the victim of an illegal pesticide application to report the alleged loss within *60 days* to (1) the ODA, (2) the pesticide applicator, and (3) the person for whom the pesticide was applied.

This process not only allows the person who is making the claim to get a timely response, but it also allows us as applicators to also provide the correct information. It increases transparency at all levels.

My greatest fear is that if this form is not in place, we are left with finger pointing and allegations. Allegations that those who are complaining may have had plenty of time, even years, to collect evidence on, but the farmer or accused may not even know there is an issue for up to 6 year. How could we ever defend ourselves or even have any evidence to back up what is being said. It would turn into a he said, she said.

The process that is in place protects all sides of the issue. It creates a requirement that all sides get equal opportunity to collect evidence, it allows for the ODA (the agency that does regulate pesticides) to have a much needed non-biased place in the discussion as well.

When people are continually wanting more transparency from us as an industry, I can't see that removing one of the very forms that allows for and increases that transparency would be a good move for either the public or the farmer.

Thank you for your time in considering this very important issue.

Brenda Frketich
Kirsch Family Farms, Inc.