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May 23, 2017

RE: HB 2739 – In Support

To: The House Committee on Rules,
Representative Jennifer Williamson, Chair

We are writing today in support of HB 2739, the bill which would hold patent holders liable if genetically engineered organisms are present on land without permission of the owner or lawful occupant.

As certified organic seed farmers in Linn County, we are very aware of the threat of cross-pollination from nearby seed fields, some of which are likely to be GE. We have taken every precaution to prevent cross-pollination to ensure the quality of the seed we produce, but Mother Nature sometimes finds ways around the barriers of time and space.

Within the current regulatory framework, if our crops were to be contaminated by GE pollen or through some other physical means, we could be held liable for patent infringement. HB 2739 would not only protect us from liability, but would enable us to protect our livelihoods through recourse against patent holders if a contamination event were to take place.

It is our hope that litigation would not be necessary, but instead that laws such as HB 2739 would compel patent holders to rein in their GE crops, for example by carrying GE traits on the maternal line & not on the paternal (pollen-bearing) line.

We need HB 2739 to protect the non-GE seed supply, & to protect our farm.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sarah Kleeger". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Sarah Kleeger
Owner, Adaptive Seeds

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Still". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Andrew Still
Owner, Adaptive Seeds