

I, Phil Hassinger, strongly oppose HB 2020 as written.

The entirety of my youth was lived in a very urban environment. Our family, for some time, did not have the need for a car, as in Philadelphia public transportation was adequate to get you about anywhere. My "post youth" environment, however, was on the other end of the spectrum. After six years in the military, plus another six years in school I received a bachelors from UC Davis, setting the stage for entrance into my chosen vocation, farming.

I chose to begin farming in NE Oregon in a mountain valley near La Grande. Upon the move to Oregon a few unexpected costs greeted me - snow tires, warm clothes, expensive heating bills, and more. All were taken in good spirits, as this was my choice.

I quickly learned that farming had a major disadvantage, compared to most other businesses. That was the fact that you had almost no control over the price received for the commodities that you grew. Additionally, the capital required to procure equipment, land, labor and more, diminished the profit margin to very slim, indeed.

Fast forward to today. As I read HB 2020 the already thin margin in agriculture will be eroded, making farming unsustainable. Unlike as I described in my youth, I have a 32 mile round trip to "town" for even the smallest repair part, or meeting. I have no options as my urban friends enjoy. In today's environment tractors, trucks, and other farm vehicles require diesel or gas - again, no alternatives. Most of our other input costs will also rise, following the rise in fuel. For example, fertilizer, which requires natural gas to make, will skyrocket in price. Many pesticides use petrochemicals as carriers to apply.

I have spent my entire working life making my personal use of energy more efficient. My electricity use for irrigating is down 1/3 from twenty years ago. I squeeze more tillage out of each pass across the field using a tractor.

Let us not forget that Oregon's agriculture competes on a global scale. Much of what I grow goes overseas. Because of the costs that will come with HB 2020's implementation I may well be unable to compete with other commodity sources that are not burdened with these costs. Oregonians may find themselves buying their food from sources far less concerned with food safety and quality.

For the above reasons I do not support HB 2020, a bill that disproportionately loads the costs on rural Oregon and has the potential of making agriculture unsustainable.

Thank you for your consideration.

John P. Hassinger