

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

My name is Pamala Joy and I am an Ashland resident of over 25 years, with great gratitude for living in a valley where organic food is grown. I am also the founder and director of the Ashland Food Angels, a registered non-profit which has been gathering and giving away thousands of pounds of food every year since 1995. Much of this food has come from generous local organic farmers and goes to those people most in need. I am writing to request your support for **HB 2882**.

HB 2882 was written to create patent holder or manufacturer liability for genetically engineered (GE) contamination events in Oregon. Over the past decade, GE contamination events, and threats of contamination, have cost U.S. farmers **billions** of dollars—including Oregon farmers—in rejected sales, lost exports, and closed agricultural markets. I hope that you will agree with me that our farmers deserve support and it is time for a change.

Farmers lack protections from GE contamination because Oregon does not regulate GE crops. Further, with the exception of Jackson County, all Oregon counties are preempted from making decisions regarding seed cultivation in their jurisdictions, leaving a large regulatory gap.

Current legal precedent is unfavorable for farmers contaminated through no fault of their own. The legal theories of trespass, nuisance, negligence, and strict liability are not useful in GE contamination cases stemming from pollen drift. Right to Farm laws have not been useful either.

While I ultimately want to see patent holders and manufacturers held responsible for GE pollen drift contamination so farmers aren't pitted against farmers, I support legislation that calls for the regulation of GE crops in Oregon.

Addressing GE contamination is important to me because I believe that our health is based at great deal on what we eat and I have grave concerns about the long range harm that GE foods can do. Also, I believe that farmers who are working hard to provide healthy food - organic, non-GE foods - deserve to have all the support we can give them.

Please vote HB 2882 out of committee with a "do pass" recommendation. Thank you for the consideration and for your service.

Very sincerely,

Rev. Pamala Joy, Director

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~ Ashland Food Angels ~

Grassroots Volunteer Food Retrieval Program

Rev. Pamala Joy
Director/Coordinator
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