

Dear Chair Holvey and Members of the Committee:

My name is Amy Rhine. I am a seed grower and seed business owner in Talent, Oregon. 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.

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 as an organic seed grower, I need to be able to trust that the seeds that I grow are not contaminated. I need to be able to trust that the organic growers that I contract with in neighboring counties do not have contaminated seeds. I want to be accountable to gardeners and farmers who purchase these seeds that they are not contaminated.

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

Thank you,

Amy Rhine
Restoration Seeds
www.restorationseeds.com