

Submitter: Lesley Tamura
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB4141

My name is Lesley Tamura, and I have a pear orchard in Hood River County. Like many agricultural operations throughout the state, we use tractors for so many necessary tasks on the orchard, and those tractors run on diesel fuel. Cutting grass and pruning scraps, moving bins filled with 1100 pounds of pears during harvest, and applying our sprays; all of these things are absolutely necessary to continue growing pears and operating our orchard, and all require the use of diesel-fuel tractors. Without access to diesel, we would literally have to shut down our operation because we would have no way of doing the tasks we need to continue operating. It would stop us dead in our tracks, leading to so many agricultural operations going out of business. This legislation is putting Oregon's businesses and economic future at risk.

When it comes to high-powered tractors and other self-propelled farm machines like combine harvesters, the technology is still years off from finding credible alternatives to diesel that provide the power to complete our normal orchard tasks. Companies are working to create agricultural machinery that runs on alternative fuels such as electric and biofuels, but they have not been able to find a replacement to diesel fuel that can realistically provide the power needed or the mileage that you can get out of a tank of diesel fuel for long days on the field. If and when these machines do become viable, there are additional challenges: the cost to purchase them and, more importantly, the availability of the renewable fuels themselves.

Renewable diesel faces major supply challenges and cost competitiveness that have not been addressed in this legislation. There is simply not enough supply to meet Oregon's demand. As of now, people cannot purchase renewable diesel due to the supply and storage constraints. In 2019, Oregonians used 719+ million gallons of diesel, but less than 17 million gallons of renewable diesel and 60 million gallons of biodiesel were brought in to the state. Renewable diesel provided less than 3% of the fuel supply used in diesel engines. The necessary supply and infrastructure for a transition of this magnitude simply does not exist at this time, and it is completely irresponsible and frankly an abdication of your responsibilities as legislators to even consider taking away an important resource for Oregon's business and agricultural industries without ensuring that there is a suitable replacement supply for us to access.

Oregon already provides incentives and regulations to increase the renewable transportation energy used in this state in many ways: you have passed the Clean Fuels Program that incentivizes the sale of renewable diesel, DEQ is already

considering a rule that would more than double the clean fuels standard and make fuels like Renewable Diesel even more valuable, and the Environmental Quality Commission adopted the Climate Protection Program that creates a preference for Renewable Diesel.

Encouraging the use of these renewable transportation energy sources through incentives is good, but this legislation is not about incentives. This is about punishment for something we have no control over. You are punishing the businesses that have no other option but to use diesel fuel and essentially putting them out of business because they have no viable alternative to diesel fuel. How is it fair to punish us to the point of losing our businesses because of a lack of available resources? Before Oregon takes the premature and damaging step of removing critical fuels from the market, we must take the time to better understand the opportunities for new and emerging fuels and technologies that can ensure Oregon remains economically competitive.