

Submitter: Matt Cyrus
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Transportation
Measure: HB4141

Opposition to HB 4141

Chairman and members of the committee,

My name is Matt Cyrus and I am a 6th generation farmer. We have a diversified family farm near Sisters, Oregon and I am opposed to this bill. In addition to farming, I have Bachelors of Science degrees in Agricultural and Resource Economics and Business Administration.

While I support the idea of reducing our carbon footprint and reliance on petroleum, I don't think this is the right solution and may, in fact, create unintended consequences.

I would first like to point out that current diesel engines are very clean burning and necessary for agricultural production.

Secondly, pure biodiesels have not been very successful in replacing petroleum blends due to gelling issues. In fact, Portland had a very bad experience a few years ago with their fleet when the weather got cold and it required many of the injection systems to be replaced. For those of us in the colder areas of the state, such an issue could be a significant problem and even life threatening if emergency vehicles can't function.

Probably the biggest issue with replacing petroleum fuels with straight biofuels is the conversion of agricultural lands from food production to fuel production. Simple economics dictates that supply and demand affect prices. Food prices are already increasing and if more land is used for fuel production, less is available for food. Studies have already shown that as food prices increase, there is more pressure to burn the rain forests to create more agricultural land to feed the populations of those countries. I've seen studies that actually show that as we divert agricultural lands to fuel production, carbon goes up because other countries destroy more rain forest, which sequesters more carbon than what we reduce, therefore actually increasing the total carbon load. In short, our attempt to reduce carbon by increasing the use of biofuels is having the unintended consequence of increasing carbon on a global scale.

Thank you for your time. Please vote no on this bill.