

Submitter: Jeff Newtonson

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Energy and Environment

Measure: SB803

I am writing in opposition of this bill as a farmer in NE Oregon. Over my 28 years of farming wheat, Canola, barley, and mustard, I always believed the weather was the one item in our operation that threatened our livelihood more than anything else. I now believe this is no longer the case and our biggest threat comes from Salem. This is hard for me to say as I have lobbied at the Capitol for the Oregon Wheat Growers League in the late 2000's and learned many lessons and respect for the people doing the "people's work". Telling our story to legislators from downtown Portland to Southeast Oregon was always an important part of our job so our elected officials understood the sacrifice it takes to grow a crop and feed ourselves and the world. There is an obvious disconnect occurring in Salem that leads us to this legislation in front of you that does not consider the economics or livelihoods of your fellow Oregonian farmers.

To begin with, the infrastructure is simply not there to support this hair-brained idea. The crops needed to supply a renewable diesel supply are not grown in enough quantity in the Pacific Northwest and the bio-refineries in the PNW do not have the capacity to supply the needs of our farmers and other industries that rely on diesel. On my farm, I would need to set aside 28% of my farmland to grow enough bio-diesel from Camelina to run the equipment on our farm for one year. Therefore, that ground would no longer be producing food to feed people, it would no longer be generating income for our local economy, and it does not provide any fuel for the other industries that support our farm such as the trucking industry.

In conclusion, I hope common sense rules at this committee meeting and somewhere an economist is sitting behind a microphone explaining how this great state of ours works. If renewable diesel is the goal, come up with programs that incentivize the production of renewable diesel at all levels of the industry including mine instead of penalizing your fellow Oregonians who depend on petroleum diesel.

Thank you,

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