



Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Giroo, members of the Committee, my name is Rhianna Simes, I am farmer and board member with the Southern Oregon Seed Growers Association.

I am writing today in support of SB 789, which maintains current protections for the Willamette Valley's lucrative brassica vegetable seed industry.

Highland Economics was clear that the high-value brassica seed industry is worth far more to Oregon than low-value canola in terms of revenue and job creation. The assessment unequivocally underscores the need for permanent protections and also cites several canola alternatives that do not pose the same threat. This economic assessment differs from past studies as it takes cross-contamination and economic harm into account, not just pest and disease pressures.

I support SB 789 because we live in a world-class seed growing region here in Southern Oregon. We have thriving seed and farming businesses that contribute to our rural economy and provide jobs. The specialty seed industry is very concerned with genetic contamination occurring from plants and commerce traveling South via Interstate 5.

In addition, it is significant to farmers, gardeners, and vegetable eaters that the Willamette Valley is one of the last remaining regions in the world suitable for large-scale vegetable specialty seed production, including the majority of the world's brassica seed supply. Over 90% of some brassica seed varieties, like cabbage, are grown in the Willamette Valley. Increased and unpinned canola acreage could irreversibly damage this industry and negatively impact our seed industry in Southern Oregon.

For these reasons, **I strongly urge you to vote YES on SB 789.**

Thank you.

Rhianna Simes, M.S.Ed.  
Farmer and Board Member  
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