



Central Oregon Seeds, Inc.

1747 NW Mill St
Madras, OR 97741

March 13, 2023

Subject: Testimony in Support of SB 58

Dear Chair Golden and Members of the Natural Resources Committee:

My name is Richard Affeldt. I am an employee at Central Oregon Seeds, Inc. in Madras and I am a dedicated member of my community. I am writing to request your support for SB 58.

As you are well aware, persistent drought is affecting our region. The drought is taking a painful toll on all aspects of natural resources including, but not limited to irrigated agriculture. Many gains have been made in irrigation water efficiency and water conservation in the Deschutes Basin prior to the drought, but even more so in response to the drought. Nevertheless, these efforts have been insufficient to maintain irrigation water supplies to most farmers in the Basin, particularly those in the North Unit Irrigation District.

It is imperative that the state begins to investigate ways to go beyond conserving water and look for ways to enhance our water resources. Senate Bill 58 was written to investigate the opportunity that cloud seeding could bring to drought-stricken basins throughout Oregon.

Oregon is one of the top 5 seed growing regions in the world. The specialty seed industry is valued at \$400 million and the vegetable specialty seed contained within that is worth \$50 million annually. Perennial water supply shortages not only threaten this industry but also the communities that have economic ties to the specialty seed industry. Oregon farmers need water supply certainty to remain competitive in national and world markets.

We must find ways, conventional or unconventional, to balance climate variability when it comes to ensuring Oregon agriculture remains productive. Furthermore, I believe that good stewardship of our natural resources means that we collectively use our human resources to find solutions to these challenges. I support legislation that calls for the investigation into cloud seeding in Oregon.

Thank you for the consideration and for your service.