

Submitter: Avry Miller

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and  
Water

Measure: SB789

Dear Chair Helm and Committee Members:

I lead a non-profit education farm program in Oregon, utilizing local seeds adapted to our unique climate and learning how to save them are core principles to the program as we train more beginning farmers. Also as a current resident of Eugene and a former nursery and seed producer in California one of the reasons I moved to farming here is the growing region and its care and protection. Having seeds and farm jobs close to our biggest population zones in Oregon is important in many ways from education, to economic stability, to environmental and food stability / access.

For many years, protections for high-value seed crops have ensured stability and profitability for Willamette Valley seed growers, and access to the profitable global market for our seed sellers. Rolling them back is bad for business, and creates an unpredictable, unstable environment for seed growing.

We are at a pivot point with protecting the Willamette for this key industry, and for the biodiverse seed varieties that growers all over the world depend on. We must extend the protections indefinitely and protect what's good. There is simply too much to lose. Here, as with so many public policies, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

SB789 is a wise extension of the current policy, enshrining the current protections and collaborative system in state law. For these reasons, I strongly urge you to vote YES on SB 789 to ensure the Willamette Valley stays one of the vegetable seed capitals of the world, a very special place for growing high-value seeds, and an economic powerhouse for our state.

Sincerely,

Avry Owl Miller (They / Them)

Rogue Farm Corps and Formerly Perennial Permaculture Nursery