Submitter: Brenda Smola-Foti

On Behalf
Of:

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

Measure: HB4059

Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Owens and Hartman, and members of the committee:

My name is Brenda Smola-Foti and I am a farmer, community member and food advocate in Carlton. Specialty Brassica seed growing in the Willamette Valley is a vital part of our thriving small farm ecosystem here in Oregon. We are so lucky to be able to produce seeds in our region that produce millions of pounds of food the world over. It is our duty to protect the ability of our farmers to grow vegetable seeds, feeding their families through viable farm businesses, and the world through the food the seeds produce. I am writing to you to express support forHB 4059-7. I strongly oppose HB 4059-8.

I care about seed farming in the Willamette Valley Protected District because I am a both a pasture farmer raising livestock and a market garden. Both of these farming operations depend on the integrity of our regenerative farming principles. Our customers rely on us to provide non-gmo foods. It's difficult to make a promise of that magnitude if we don't have laws to protect farmland much less the ditches that become home to these unwanted seed species. I urge to continue to support the fertile & abundant Willamette valley that we are known for globally.

I am grateful for the work of the committee, the named isolation districts and the limitation of GE canola in the WVPD. We urge you to remember what Oregon's seed growers bring to the table through the farming they enable, the rural economies their farms participate in, the crucial knowledge they hold and the need for food security through seed security. This proposal already represents a huge compromise for the seed growers and we cannot afford to lose any more ground. When you consider HB 4059, please listen to the guidance of specialty seed growers and support the strongest possible option for Oregon.
Sincerely,

Brenda Smola-Foti, TABULA RASA FARMS