



February 15, 2024

**TO:** House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources and Water

**FR:** Sharla Moffett, Oregon Business & Industry

**RE:** Opposition to HB 4059

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Oregon Business & Industry (OBI) is a statewide association representing businesses from a wide variety of industries and from each of Oregon's 36 counties. In addition to being the statewide chamber of commerce, OBI is the state affiliate for the National Association of Manufacturers and the National Retail Federation. Our 1,600 member companies, more than 80% of which are small businesses, employ more than 250,000 Oregonians. Oregon's private sector businesses help drive a healthy, prosperous economy for the benefit of everyone.

HB 4059 sets major restrictions on all brassica crops, not just canola. Further, the bill could fuel additional restrictions on genetically engineered (GE) products for which there is no scientific justification.

OBI is opposed to HB 4059.

The bill goes beyond the recommendations of the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA) and appears to be a solution in search of a problem. There was broad agreement in the 2023 legislative session that pinning and scientifically supported isolation distances of crops obviated the need for caps and restrictions.

Oregon State University scientists have established that there is no scientific reason for treating GE brassicas differently than conventionally bred brassicas. Further, ODA has carefully examined state GE policies with recommendations that support growers retaining the legal right to choose the production technologies necessary to meet the markets they choose to serve.

HB 4059 fails to acknowledge global scientific support for GE and its importance in the future of plant breeding. The bill's provisions would unnecessarily and unjustifiably restrict Oregon growers from future innovations and markets.

GE brassica presents no threat to public health or the environment that would support restrictions of the magnitude that SB 4059 proposes. Oregon growers compete in global markets. The bill inappropriately chooses winners and losers depending on the variety of brassica a producer grows.

OBI urges the committee to abandon this heavy-handed and unnecessary approach.

Thank you for the opportunity to raise these concerns.