

Submitter: Kathleen Sitton

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and Wildfire

Measure: HB4059

NO ON 4059

HB 4059 was intended to support coexistence between canola and specialty seed producers. Rather than a fair solution, the -7 proposes extreme and permanent restrictions on genetic engineering, a key technology for future food production. The -7 caters to one industry's market standards while unfairly restricting access to markets and opportunities for other producers. • The -7 proposes restrictions on genetic engineering in the entire Willamette Valley, for all brassica crops, not just canola. This does not implement the Oregon Dept of Agriculture workgroup recommendations. Instead, it unnecessarily restricts crops and markets and goes far beyond those needing solutions. • Consensus from legislators in the 2023 session was to replace restrictions on crops with a public pinning system and science-based isolation distances. With pinning and isolation practices, caps and restrictions on other crops are not necessary. • The proposed restriction on genetic engineering has no scientific basis. Oregon State University scientists stated clearly on the record: there is no scientific reason to treat GE brassicas differently from conventionally bred brassicas. • The proposed restriction goes against ODA's own policies, which support growers retaining the legal right to choose production technologies necessary to meet the markets they choose to serve. • The proposed restriction is regressive and ignores global scientific recognition that genetic engineering (e.g. CRISPR technology) is the future of plant breeding. This bill would restrict Oregon growers from future innovations and markets. • There is no human or environmental health threat justifying this restriction. This simply prioritizes one industry, while disadvantaging others. Not the role of state policy, nor an appropriate use of taxpayer dollars.