

Submitter: Alex Duerst
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and
Wildfire
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB747

My name is Alex Duerst. I am a grass seed and hazelnut farmer from the Silverton area. I am writing in opposition to SB 747.

I would start by asking a question to all who support this bill: Do you think farmers would throw money down the drain? I think the answer is no.

Fertilizer is very expensive, and the price will continue to increase. Return on investment is something farmers assess on a daily basis. No farmer would blatantly over apply fertilizer in a manner that will not have a positive ROI. The term "over applying" seems to be arbitrary as used in this bill, as there are so many different crops grown in Oregon that require such vast different rates of fertilizer. Without having defined suggested use rates or limits on fertilizer usage per crop and soil type, this will be a very difficult and likely impossible thing to enforce. I suggest and ask that this bill be one that does not move forward without a robust discussion with producers and agriculture experts. What about the fertilizer usage by the consumers in suburban areas? Think of the hundreds of thousands of people with irrigated yards that use fertilizer. I would guess that the most over application of fertilizer occurs with the homeowners and their over usage runs off right down the storm drains. I know the bill says persons with at least 200 acres of irrigated acres must report. This seems like an arbitrary number as well. Have you researched or is there data out there to suggest what percentage of total fertilizer usage is by farmers vs homeowners, golf courses, public spaces, etc.? To impose a bill like this on farmers would have a negative effect on their livelihoods. We have existing rules and regulations that we must follow, along with new ones being proposed all the time. Please allow us to have a voice in the things that affect us.

Thank you for reading this.

Respectfully,

Alex Duerst