

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

Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

My name is Jon Iverson and I am a third generation family farmer outside of Woodburn, OR where we farm around 1,100 acres and I am here to urge you to vote no on SB 747 for the several reasons I have outlined below.

The requirements are vague - While we farm around 1,100 acres about half are acres we lease from other people. Would landlords be required to file this paperwork or would the farmer be required to fill this out for every landlord? Of the remaining acres we own, most are held in separate LLC's depending on when we purchased the property and what family members contributed, are we exempt because no one LLC has more than 200 acres?

There is no need for this as farmers are already closely monitoring their inputs – This bill is pointing the finger without talking to farmers about what is really going on. A proactive approach of working with farmers and Oregon State University would yield much better answers than this bill. Farmers are already working to reduce the cost of inputs and fertilizer is at the top of that list. It is expensive to over apply, and most growers have invested heavily in equipment that is more accurate to prevent over application. Many crop commissions, led and funded by growers, put money into research done by Oregon State University or USDA ARS to determine the right amount of fertilizer to apply, this includes funding research on fertilizer efficiency and ways to do more with less. Our farm for example is rotating more legume crops like clover and vetch in our rotations as a way to reduce fertilizer needs.

This leads to struggling farms - With the help of an Oregon State Extension agent we recently took a group of young growers to Denmark. Denmark grows a lot of grass and clover seed like Oregon. One of the reasons we wanted to visit Denmark was to see how they handle EU restrictions. One of which is fertilizer restrictions. Danish farmers are required to submit crop plans to the government and then are allowed only so much fertilizer. The amount given is not enough for the crops, so growers have to decide which crop to sacrifice by starving it of needed nutrients. Denmark used to be self-sufficient in animal feed and now must import feed for its hogs because they can't get the protein levels required in their own crops. The way Danish farmers have been able to survive with such tight requirements has been large government farm subsidies and I don't believe this is the route Oregon wants to go.

Farmers aren't the problem - Farmers livelihoods depend on making money off their acres. We spend a lot of time on continuing education to make sure we are making smart fertility decisions on our farm because the margins are tight. On the other hand, homeowners do not attend such classes. To keep lawns green homeowners, tend be more likely to over fertilize and collectively be larger source of run-off than farmers.

Lastly, ODA doesn't have the budget for this. ODA is already struggling to accomplish everything they are required to do with the budget they have. How are they going to take on a new tracking program let alone have the staff to review or enforce such rules?

Thank you for taking the time to read my testimony, I am happy to discuss any of these points further especially our young farmer trip to Denmark. I also invite you to our farm to see what really goes on. Please vote no on this bill, it is a solution looking for a problem.