

From Rodney Nelson
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To: Montana State Legislators

Dear Legislators

My name is Rodney Nelson and I am a farmer from North Dakota. Before I get into my story I would like to thank you for your interest in this extremely important matter. Also I am sorry I was not able to attend your hearing in person, so I hope this letter will suffice. There is so many horrific details about this case I could write a book that would astound you, but I will try and keep this short.

A few years back a law was passed in North Dakota that was dubbed the (Nelson bill) and yes I and my family were the inspiration for the bill. In 1999 I and my family were falsely accused by Monsanto Corporation of saving soybean seed from our 1998 harvest and replanting it in 1999. Under the new seed patents this practice is now illegal in the United States. Without any presented or substantiated evidence or any real attempt to look over our records with us they filled a law suit against us in the Federal court of Missouri for patent infringement, unjust enrichment, among other ridiculous things I have since forgotten. What was to follow was a 2 year living hell that nearly killed my father and has forever left scares in us that I don't think will ever heal. Needless to say my heart still pounds hard with fury at the mention of Monsanto. You see when Monsanto sues a farmer they sue for the entire gross value of your crop times 3, plus punitive damages, plus attorney fees which they seem to like to round off at \$1,000,000.00. Of course there probably isn't a farm in the country that could survive that kind of a loss. Most farmers bow under the pressure of mounting legal bills and eventually cave into an out of court settlement, of course this comes with a gag order that the farmer can never speak of the entire incident to anyone ever, but Monsanto is free to parade your name around as an example to scare other farmers into never saving seed. For a copy of one such letter go to my website (nelsonfarm.net) there you can read in depth articles about our ordeal and others. Because we were innocent and infuriated over the accusations we went very public over the ordeal because we felt a sense of responsibility to alert others of this company's activities. We were not about to let this company extract one damn nickel from us at any cost. Our attention then turned to their bogus so-called investigation. In the end this proved the need for a law that was simply designed to force Monsanto and other patent holders to be honest and to afford an unsuspecting farmer some basic rights to a fair investigation As we with the help of a high powered law firm were about to file a lawsuit against Monsanto they quickly came to terms and dropped all charges against us and dismissed the case. Had we not had the resources to fight them you can imagine were this could have ended. All of this could have been avoided if an honest, open, above board investigation would have been done in the first place, but it was obvious to us this was never their intention. With the knowledge I have of their tactics there are a few actually small but very important changes that must be made to this bill in order for you to accomplish your objective. I would be happy to discuss this with any of you via phone @ 701-347-5456

Sincerely Rodney Nelson