



March 2, 2017

Testimony in Support of SB 805
Senate Committee on Environment and Natural Resources

Chairs Dembrow, members of the Committee:

Thank you for your consideration of SB 805, a bill that would provide funding necessary to maintain current service levels for Oregon State University's Statewide Public Service Programs.

Friends of Family Farmers represents small and mid-sized farmers and ranchers across Oregon and we were part of a diverse coalition that supported legislation in 2015 to increase funding for OSU Extension and Agricultural Experiment Stations. These programs provide technical support, educational opportunities and research important to farmers and ranchers of all types throughout the state. Through the 2015 funding levels approved by the Legislature, OSU was able to deepen investments in programs that support small farms, beginning farmers, community food systems, pollinator health, fermentation sciences, water quality protection, food safety and more. Without the passage of SB 805, important investments made in 2015 to the OSU Statewide Public Service Programs will be largely eliminated.

While the Governor's recommended budget for the 2017-19 biennium kept current funding levels for the OSU Statewide Public Service Programs in place, it did not account for an additional \$9.4 million needed to actually maintain current service levels for these programs. Providing funding needed to maintain current service levels via SB 805 will protect the \$14 million investment made in 2015. If current service levels are not maintained through the passage of SB 805, the Statewide Public Service programs will in effect be receiving a nearly 70% cut.

Without the passage of SB 805, the shortfall will be approximately \$5 million for Agricultural Experiment Stations, and \$3.6 million for the Extension Service. Our members across the state utilize and benefit from the highly professional technical support, educational programming and research provided by Oregon's Agricultural Experiment Stations and the Extension Service. State investment in these programs also helps leverage federal grant dollars, and the elimination of research positions will inhibit OSU's ability to compete for federal grant funding.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify today, and we urge your support for SB 805.

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