

Paul L Evans
STATE REPRESENTATIVE
DISTRICT 20



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

February 7, 2019

Representative Nancy Nathanson
Chairperson, House Committee on Revenue
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

Chair Nathanson, Vice-Chairs Findley and Marsh, Committee Members:

I regret that a standing medical appointment prohibits my personal participation in this hearing. However, I have asked my Chief of Staff Mr. Evans Sorce, to deliver these comments on my behalf.

HB 2538 is offered for your consideration as a dual-purpose utility: to encourage accelerated growth in fresh produce for our regional food banks as well as an investment in our resiliency posture. The goal is simple: encourage people with available space to enter into partnerships that can significantly increase the amount of food grown within our state borders. It is based upon a belief that many home owners who might otherwise spend money and time on maintaining lawns and/or landscaping, may well be interested in a modest financial incentive associated with allowing their lawn space to be optimized to produce food for the needy within their own communities.

During WWII "Victory Gardens" sprouted up across our country. I believe we can combat hunger with a grass-roots, community-based lawn to garden strategic investment. If passed this measure would provide our food banks with another tool for their toolbox. Imagine a community where schools integrate science education and practical learning opportunities provided by added space for community gardens. With the appropriate amount of planning we can emphasize areas nearest schools and make stewardship of our natural world and hunger relief a lifelong lesson for our students.

This bill provides a significant value for minimal costs. It can facilitate a rethinking of the best use of available space. It might facilitate a strengthening of relationships within communities. And if given the opportunity, it will vastly expand the availability of fresh, locally grown produce, for our families, friends, and neighbors who are struggling. Together we can promote a new way of thinking about our privately owned residential spaces.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 2538 today. Please let me know if there are specific questions you might have, or additional information you might require for a positive disposition of this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Paul L. Evans".

Paul L. Evans
Oregon House of Representatives (HD 20)