

March 13, 2019

LETTER IN SUPPORT OF HB 3085, HB 3090, HB 3091

Dear Esteemed Members of the House Committee on Agriculture and Natural Resources:

My name is Amy Wong and I am active in regenerative agriculture issues and I am writing in support of the following bills:

HB 3085 – Creates a new Family Farmer Loan Program managed by the state’s economic development agency, Business Oregon, to offer direct loans to smaller and beginning family farmers for land or equipment.

HB 3090 – Establishes a new beginning farmer and rancher incentive program at the Oregon Department of Agriculture focused on issues of student loan debt forgiveness and tuition assistance for beginning farmers.

HB 3091 – Reduces fees and costs to borrowers using the state’s existing ‘Aggie Bonds’ beginning farmer loan program, which is intended to incentivize lower interest private lending to beginning farmers and ranchers for land and equipment.

The majority of Oregon’s farmers are aging out and the state needs to ensure that programs are in place to aid successful succession planning so that Oregon can maintain a robust agricultural economy. Young adults from all socioeconomic levels should be able to stabilize their finances through tuition assistance and loan forgiveness, as well as have access to farm financing, in order create new generations of Oregon farmers. Access to land is challenging enough and Oregon should incentive financing modalities so as to maximize new farmer success.

I want to see Oregon become a leader in organic and regenerative agriculture, including increased organic seed production, and these programs will help support this vision.

Most sincerely,

Amy Wong
Cultivate Oregon and Our Family Farms
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