

HB 2086 A STAFF MEASURE SUMMARY

Carrier: Sen. Dembrow

Senate Committee On Environment and Natural Resources

Action Date: 03/14/19

Action: Do pass the A-Eng bill.

Vote: 4-1-0-0

Yeas: 4 - Dembrow, Olsen, Prozanski, Roblan

Nays: 1 - Bentz

Fiscal: No fiscal impact

Revenue: No revenue impact

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Meeting Dates: 3/7, 3/14

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES:

Revises Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program definitions and terminology related to purpose, administration, and eligibility criteria of the program. Modifies purpose of the working land conservation covenant and easement from to "support" land for agricultural production to "preserve and protect" land for agricultural production. Removes authority of Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (Commission) to adopt rules and specifies that the Commission recommends to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board the adoption of program rules. Expands eligible applicants for grants from 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporations to any not-for-profit organization other than a state agency.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Proposed language changes and clarifications are a result of rulemaking process
- Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program implementation
- Potential projects

EFFECT OF AMENDMENT:

No amendment.

BACKGROUND:

The Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program and Oregon Agricultural Heritage Commission (Commission) were established by the legislature in 2017 to provide voluntary incentives to farmers and ranchers to support practices that maintain or enhance both agriculture and natural resources on agricultural lands. In 2018, the Commission engaged in rulemaking related to program administration, technical assistance, farm and ranch succession planning, working land covenants and easements, and conservation management planning. Rulemaking was completed and approved by the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board in January of 2019.

House Bill 2086 A would revise the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program statutes related to purpose, administration, and eligibility criteria of the program.