



Organic Agsystems Consulting

Policy Analysis to Assist Organic Regulators ♦ Since 1982

March 5, 2021

The Senate Committee on Education

Attn: Chair Senator Michael Dembrow
Vice-Chair Senator Chuck Thomsen
Members of the Committee

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to express my strong support of SB 404-2.

My name is Lynn S. Coody M.S. and I am the owner of Organic Agsystems Consulting, which is located in Eugene. I began working in the organic trade in 1974 and have devoted my long career to providing services that support the development of organic farms, organic certification programs, organic research and education programs, and regulatory infrastructure for the organic trade. In 1989, I co-authored Oregon's groundbreaking organic law, which established standards for organic production and marketing in Oregon, as well as mechanisms for enforcement of these standards through the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA). This system provided excellent oversight for Oregon's organic trade until it was superseded by the implementation of the National Organic Program by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) in 2002.

I support SB 404-2 because my work with organic and transitioning farmers makes me aware of the high value of site-specific information in providing the practical solutions needed for success. I believe that the positions at the Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems at OSU Extension Services will provide real value to both organic farmers, as well as conventional farmers, who need support in learning about and implementing farming practices that regenerate soils, water, and other agricultural resources. Such practices not only benefit farmers, but society as a whole, by providing real-world methods for capturing carbon, increasing organic soil organic matter, and fostering biodiversity.

SB 404-2 would also create two new positions at ODA. Of special interest to me is the Organic Policy Special Assistant to the Director. As someone who has worked on a wide range of organic policy projects for many years, I am familiar with the benefits of coordinating marketing and trade programs and especially, of integrating ODA's activities to better support Oregon's organic sector. Adding a position to ODA that focuses on these mandates is a wonderful way to take advantage of existing programs by framing them so that they are more relevant to, and supportive of, organic production practices. In my work on organic policy at the federal level, I have seen a parallel approach bear fruit at USDA through the agency's creation of a position called "Organic and Sustainable Agriculture Policy Advisor" in the office of the Secretary of Agriculture.

I also appreciate the provision in SE 404-2 that ensures that organic products in Oregon are eligible for purchase by recipients of the Women, Infants and Children (WIC) public assistance program. This will benefit many young families by ensuring their access to healthy food while also providing a channel for marketing organic foods such as fresh fruits and vegetables grown by Oregon's organic farmers.

Thank you for considering the comments in this letter. I strongly urge you to vote in support of SB404-2 to support Oregon's organic trade, to increase economic opportunities in Oregon's rural areas, and to provide research and education on agricultural practices that contribute to mitigating climate change.

Respectfully Submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lynn S. Coody". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "L" and a long, sweeping underline.

Lynn S. Coody, M.S.
Principal Consultant, Organic Agsystems Consulting
Eugene, OR