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## In Support of SB 1532 Oregon Organic Coalition

February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2022,

Chair Golden, Vice Chair Kennemer and Members of the Senate  
Natural Resources and Wildfire Committee,

Thank you for this opportunity to be with you. I'm Jonathan  
Manton and I represent the Oregon Organic Coalition.

I'm the grandson of Leon Powell, a conventional vegetable and  
hog farmer in Johnson County, Georgia who passed away when  
I was a young man. I share my support for this bill today with  
his spirit in mind.

This bill is about providing two important resources to all  
farmers, regardless of whether they are 'conventional',  
'organic' or as is more and more the case, a farmer who grows  
both conventionally and organically on the same farm.

- 1) This bill is to provide an economic analysis so that  
Oregon's agriculture community can have access to the  
latest state specific data—to assess and reveal the  
tremendous economic opportunities we are seeing for  
immediate, medium and long-term growth in organic  
trade.

2) This bill is to provide the research and critical technical assistance to farmers (from a trusted source) who wish to seize upon these opportunities.

I want to make sure I also confirm what this bill is NOT.

- 1) This bill is not regulatory in any manner.
- 2) This bill is not, nor could it, lead to a tax increase.
- 3) Nothing in this bill is intended to ONLY benefit certified organic farmers.

Chris Jagger from Blue Fox Farms spoke to this community in the fall—paraphrasing here, he said his community in southern Oregon -be they using conventional or organic practices, view themselves as farmers first.

Currently all vegetable farmers in Oregon have access to the research and technical assistance being conducted by the Center for Small Farms and Community Food Systems at OSU.

And currently all dairy (pastures and forages) farmers have access to the same. Those are the two positions at the Center that exist because the legislature in 2019 acted to provide funding for them.

The organic community very much also has skin in the game. Over \$275,000 has been given to the Center by Oregon Tilth and other organic oriented businesses since 2009.

It is now time for the legislature to act again, to extend these opportunities with this cluster hire for farmers who grow fruits, nuts, grains and pulsus, perennials, seeds, ect.

The OBBD economic analysis is a vital economic link to this. We know from internal conversations that large scale organic wholesalers in Oregon, for example, are having to source nearly all of their purchases of produce from organic farms located in California and Mexico.

This analysis will show an array of growth opportunities like that one, that not only apply to farmers but also infrastructure like food processing and other related wholesale, retail, marketing, and organic product trade.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this bill. I urge your support for SB 1532 -2, as well as your support for the OSU Extension Services Continuing Services Budget Requests.

Best wishes,  
Jonathan Manton, Advocate  
Oregon Organic Coalition