

Requested by Representative HELM

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO
HOUSE BILL 2998**

1 On page 1 of the printed bill, line 2, delete “creating new provisions;
2 amending ORS 352.808;”.

3 Delete lines 4 through 28 and delete pages 2 through 7 and insert:

4 **“SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section and section 2 of this 2023
5 Act:**

6 **“(a) ‘Soil and water conservation district’ means a political subdi-
7 vision of this state described in ORS 568.550.**

8 **“(b) ‘Soil health’ means the overall composition of soil, including
9 soil structure, the water and nutrient holding capacity of the soil, the
10 amount of organic matter in the soil and the continued capacity of the
11 soil to function as a biological system.**

12 **“(c) ‘Soil health practice’ means an agricultural practice that is
13 scientifically supported to improve soil health over time or is broadly
14 consistent with any of the soil health principles of the Natural Re-
15 sources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Ag-
16 riculture.**

17 **“(2) There is created the Oregon Soil Health Initiative. The purpose
18 of the initiative is to promote soil health in this state by advancing
19 voluntary and incentive-based soil health strategies through activities
20 that include, but are not limited to, providing technical assistance,
21 outreach, education, financial incentives or other resources and sup-**

1 **porting research.**

2 **“SECTION 2. To achieve the purpose described in section 1 (2) of**
3 **this 2023 Act, as far as is practicable and subject to available funds:**

4 **“(1) The Oregon State University Extension Service and any soil**
5 **and water conservation districts that voluntarily participate in the**
6 **Oregon Soil Health Initiative shall:**

7 **“(a) Provide technical assistance to agricultural producers to in-**
8 **crease voluntary adoption of soil health practices.**

9 **“(b) Promote soil health practices to Oregon’s agricultural com-**
10 **munities by:**

11 **“(A) Conducting outreach and education, including trainings for**
12 **agricultural producers to promote soil health across this state’s di-**
13 **verse regions and production types;**

14 **“(B) Promoting farmer-to-farmer learning;**

15 **“(C) Collaborating with local partners and agricultural producers**
16 **to conduct soil health demonstration projects to showcase soil health**
17 **research and practices and build statewide awareness and under-**
18 **standing;**

19 **“(D) Highlighting existing soil health improvement efforts by**
20 **Oregon farmers and ranchers; and**

21 **“(E) Supporting agricultural producers in the identification of those**
22 **producers’ soil health goals and in efforts to monitor success in**
23 **reaching those goals.**

24 **“(c) Ensure that technical assistance, outreach and education de-**
25 **scribed in this subsection are accessible on an equitable and culturally**
26 **appropriate basis to agricultural producers across Oregon’s diverse**
27 **agricultural communities and geographies including, but not limited**
28 **to, veteran farmers or ranchers, beginning farmers or ranchers or so-**
29 **cially disadvantaged farmers or ranchers, as those terms are defined**
30 **in 7 U.S.C. 2279, and farmers or ranchers who are women.**

1 “(2) The Oregon State University Extension Service shall provide
2 extension specialist capacity to promote soil health, with a focus on
3 cropping systems or on geographic regions of this state where addi-
4 tional support and capacity are needed.

5 “(3) The College of Agricultural Sciences of Oregon State University
6 shall train technical service providers in soil sample collection and
7 provide free or low-cost soil health testing to voluntary participants.

8 “(4) The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board shall:

9 “(a) Provide grants under ORS 541.984 for the voluntary implemen-
10 tation of soil health practices, including the continuation or expansion
11 of existing soil health practices and the transition to new soil health
12 practices.

13 “(b) Provide grants to soil and water conservation districts and
14 other technical assistance providers to increase their capacity to pro-
15 vide technical assistance and equipment to agricultural producers to
16 improve soil health.

17 “SECTION 3. The State Department of Agriculture shall establish,
18 hire and employ one full-time equivalent position of soil health spe-
19 cialist. The soil health specialist shall coordinate with and support the
20 efforts of the Oregon State University Extension Service, the College
21 of Agricultural Sciences of Oregon State University, the Oregon
22 Watershed Enhancement Board, soil and water conservation districts,
23 federal agencies, tribal governments, nongovernmental organizations
24 and any other organization to support the purpose of the Oregon Soil
25 Health Initiative described in section 1 (2) of this 2023 Act.

26 “SECTION 4. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropri-
27 ation, there is appropriated to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement
28 Board, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, out of the General
29 Fund, for deposit in the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Fund estab-
30 lished under ORS 541.978, the following amounts for the following

1 purposes:

2 “(1) \$500,000 for the purpose of providing grants under section 2
3 (4)(a) of this 2023 Act; and

4 “(2) \$480,000 for the purpose of providing grants under section 2
5 (4)(b) of this 2023 Act.

6 **“SECTION 5.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropri-
7 ation, there is appropriated to the Higher Education Coordinating
8 Commission, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, out of the Gen-
9 eral Fund, the following amounts for the following purposes:

10 “(1) \$225,000 for distribution to the College of Agricultural Sciences
11 of Oregon State University for the purpose of carrying out the pro-
12 visions of section 2 (3) of this 2023 Act.

13 “(2) \$480,000 for distribution to Oregon State University Extension
14 Service for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of section 2 (2)
15 of this 2023 Act.

16 **“SECTION 6.** In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropri-
17 ation, there is appropriated to the State Department of Agriculture,
18 for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, out of the General Fund, the
19 amount of \$272,234, which may be expended for the purpose of carrying
20 out section 3 of this 2023 Act.

21 **“SECTION 7.** This 2023 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the
22 date on which the 2023 regular session of the Eighty-second Legislative
23 Assembly adjourns sine die.”.

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