

Dear Chair Lieber and Committee Members,

I would like to submit this letter of support for SB 775.

SB 775 seeks to update the eligibility rules for soil and water conservation districts so candidates for zoned seats in districts with populations of over 250,000 do not have to own or manage at least 10 acres of land. I feel this is a long overdue update to the current statute.

I live in the East Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District's area and the majority of the population lives in the urban area and do not own or manage 10+ acres of land. This requirement does not realistically address the needs of SWCD's with larger populations and significant urban considerations when making policy decisions regarding soil and water health.

There are no restrictions to run for any other special districts such as school boards, fire districts, etc., who are using public tax dollars in open elections on the ballot. I believe that all people should be able to run for these seats. It ensures that as a voter I have more choices and more opportunities for folks to run. Passing SB 775 will accomplish this and be the first steps to help address the unique soil and water health needs in highly urbanized areas.

Please vote yes on SB 775 to remove the 10 acre eligibility criteria for SWCD's serving populations over 250,000 people. Thank you for your consideration.