



Benton Soil and Water
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

136 SW Washington Ave., Suite 201
Corvallis, Oregon 97333
541.753.7208
bentonswcd.org

February 13, 2023

Representative Ken Helm
House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
900 Court St. NE, H-490
Salem, OR 97301

RE: House Bill 2998, Oregon Soil Health Initiative

Chair Helm and members of the Committee,

The Benton Soil and Water Conservation District (BSWCD) is a local government organization that serves residents in Benton County, Oregon. The mission of BSWCD is to support conservation and stewardship of natural resources through a variety of efforts ranging from outreach and education, to implementing on-the ground conservation projects, providing technical services, and when possible, offering financial support to landowners and others in our community for high priority conservation-related endeavors.

We strongly support HB 2998, which establishes the Oregon Soil Health Initiative to leverage existing programs and expand resources to support farmers and ranchers to implement soil health practices that benefit their land and the environment.

In the past, the Oregon State Legislature has identified Willamette Valley climate mitigation directives to provide farmers and ranchers support to offset costs of climate and support methods that protect soil productivity and enhance its capacity for carbon sequestration. House Bill 2998 is an effective effort to provide a pathway to achieve the legislative directives.

Benton SWCD has helped growers in Benton County with soil health projects for many years. In 2009, Oregon NRCS awarded Benton SWCD a Conservation Innovation Grant for the Soil Quality Project. Two additional BSWCD soil health projects, funded by Western Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education and USDA Risk Management Agency, focused on soil health education and outreach.

The Healthy Soils Bill would give us capacity to do this work to support farmers and ranchers in our county.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nathan Johnson", is written over a blue horizontal line.

[Nathan Johnson \(Feb 13, 2023 20:00 PST\)](#)

Nathan Johnson
Board Chair

The Benton SWCD's mission is engage Benton County residents in the conservation and stewardship of natural resources for current and future generations.


Letter of support HB 2998 Benton SWCD


Final Audit Report


2023-02-14


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"Letter of support HB 2998 Benton SWCD" History


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