



February 15, 2023

RE: HB 2998 Soil Health

Dear Chair Helm and Committee Members:

The West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District is a publicly funded local government special district whose mission is to provide resources, information, and expertise to inspire people to actively improve air and water quality, fish and wildlife habitat, and soil health. We work with property owners to make improvements to their land for both productivity and for habitat benefits.

We support HB 2998, which establishes the Oregon Soil Health Initiative. This Initiative would provide us with the necessary tools to support our working land producers, including farmers on Sauvie Island and small lot forestry managers along Skyline Ridge. It will position us to receive more federal funding and implement programs to keep the soil covered, maintain the presence of living roots, and enhance biodiversity. Through this Initiative, we will be able to more effectively implement best practices such as reduced or no tillage, cover cropping, application of organic compost amendments, and riparian plantings.

This bill would provide our Soil and Water Conservation District, and others around the state, additional capacity to provide training and education on soil health, and achieve our core mission of voluntary on-the-ground projects through collaboration with land owners and managers and development of critical local partnerships.

We strongly urge you to vote yes on HB 2998.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "TPRiggsby".

Terri Preeg Riggsby  
Chair and Zone 5 Director

cc: West Multnomah Soil & Water Conservation District Board of Directors; Oregon Association of Conservation Districts