

My name is Jesse Nichols. I'm a farmer at Stoneboat Farm in Hillsboro  
I'm testifying in support of HB 2998:

Stoneboat Farm is proud to be one of over 50 farms and ranches across Oregon  
who support the Healthy Soils Bill.

Since acquiring our land in 2014, we have prioritized soil health through regular  
cover crop rotation to build soil organic matter. We have found that cover cropping  
increases soil health in terms of nutrient retention, soil texture, decreased water use and  
increased water retention.

Our fields produce healthy, pest resistant vegetables using only biological  
controls. For nine years we have produced plentiful vegetables without chemicals,  
benefitting the environment, reducing our costs and reducing erosion into Storey Creek  
caused by previous practices on the land.

Our ecosystem management practices include cover-cropped fields and perennial  
and annual spaces with native flowers which are left to flower and attract beneficial  
predator insects as well as pollinators.

Since 2021, I have managed CAMPO, a project on our farm aimed at taking our  
soil stewardship and ecologically minded practices even further through no-till  
agriculture. CAMPO has also created one of our state's only sustainable farmer training  
programs in Spanish which is oriented towards creating long term opportunities in  
agriculture for people who want to take care of the soil and protect our ecosystem.

We know that farmers learn best from other farmers. One of the main strategies of  
the Soil Health Initiative in HB 2998 is farmer-to-farmer education, which would  
provide the opportunity for farms like ours to share our successes and lessons learned,  
and the opportunity for us to learn from others.

I ask that you support HB 2998. Thank you for your time.