



March 15<sup>th</sup> 2023

House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Oregon State Legislature  
900 Court St. NE  
Salem, Oregon

Re: **Support for HB 3244**, Task Force on the Economic Competitiveness of Oregon Agriculture

Chair Helm and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on HB 3244. The undersigned represent farmers, ranchers, and foresters around the state who care about the health of Oregon's agricultural industry and the broader natural resources sector. We applaud this important first step in better understanding the myriad of challenges facing Oregon's farmers and ranchers.

Over the last few years, Oregon's agricultural sector has faced a number of new pressures, from drought and ice to COVID-19 and associated labor and supply chain shortages. On top of this, The Legislature has passed new laws significantly raising labor costs and taxes. This combination of pressures poses a serious challenge to an important economic sector in the state. The legislature would benefit from a full and detailed understanding of the current economic burden and outlook for Oregon agriculture.

We look forward to a robust analysis commissioned by the task force, one that would look at Oregon's agricultural sector and the needs across our 240+ commodities. We appreciate the intent to consider the broader context of weather, labor, market, and regulatory challenges impacting Oregon's agricultural industry that growers in other states producing similar agricultural products may not face. This sort of analysis is critical to identify needs and priorities to sustain Oregon's agricultural sector, and to help guide legislative actions and funding in future sessions that would help support this critical industry.

We are proud of the work Oregon's growers do to care for our land, animals and communities. We support HB 3244 as a critical first step to understanding the economic outlook for Oregon's agricultural industry. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on HB 3244. We look forward to supporting the work of this task force and to seeing the outcomes of this review.