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and
GROWING STRONG

Testimony on SB 58

Oregon Farm Bureau Federation
Senate Committee on Natural Resources
March 16, 2023

Chair Golden and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Farm Bureau Federation appreciates the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of our nearly 6,600 family farm and ranch members across the state of Oregon, all of whom rely on water in one form or another for their farms and ranches to remain viable. We strongly support SB58, which instructs Oregon Water Resources Department to adopt rules authorizing cloud seeding programs and ensure that water generated through cloud seeding programs is distributed in accordance with Oregon water laws.

Water is the lifeblood for Oregon's farmers and ranchers; it is essential for Oregon's agricultural economy and many farms and ranches in Oregon cannot operate without secure access to water. Agriculture contributes an estimated \$50 billion dollars to the state's economy, making it Oregon's second largest economic driver. Given the importance of water to all of Oregon's 220+ commodities, it is critical that we ensure that we maintain access to water and invest where we can in securing a better water future for Oregon.

Drought has affected each of Oregon's diverse commodities and growing regions, from the normally wet coastal region to the arid Southeastern part of the state. SB 58 would investigate the opportunity to potentially bring a new program to Oregon, one that over half of Western U.S. states are already participating in, that has the possibility of mitigating the effects of drought. Oregon needs all the tools available to increase our water supply certainty for not just farmers, but to meet all of Oregon's water supply needs.

We would encourage the committee to consider passage of SB 58. Thank you.

Please email lauren@oregonfb.org with any questions related to these comments.