

Submitter: Matthew Cook

On Behalf
Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Natural
Resources

Measure: HB5003

Chair Dembrow, Co-chair Pham, members of the committee

Thank you for reading and considering my testimony.

My name is Matthew Cook, I am a 4th generation farmer in Albany, where my family farms 1150 acres of vegetables, hazelnuts, specialty seed crops and grass seed. I currently farm with my parents, my wife and my 4 children. Part of my purpose in life is to provide a future for my kids on my family farm, be a good steward of the land, and to see agriculture thrive in Oregon. Currently I am the chair of the Oregon Process Vegetable Commission and the chair of the Oregon Commodity Commission Oversight Committee.

I would like to share with you my support of HB 5002 and HB 5003. Specifically I would like to share with you the importance of ODA Market Access programs.

In Oregon we have the privilege and opportunity grow over 220 commodities. As you can probably imagine, this requires a huge amount of knowledge and attention to assist the producers of these commodities with gaining and securing market access. The sheer amount of foot work and attention the totality of these commodities need is exponential.

This program is critical to my family farm as the ODA assists in managing the commodity commissions which provide relevant research and market opportunities. These commodity commissions work hand in hand with ODA to support and provide information to the ODA on what farmers need in order to sell and market their crops.

As the global economy gets more competitive, we need the ODA to help gain traction with world wide markets to keep Oregon's produce as relevant as possible. We have some of the highest quality produce in the world and people look to Oregon as a leader in agriculture. The ODA has the unique opportunity to share this globally and not only secure markets for Oregonians, but also give opportunities to other countries to share in our bountiful harvests.

These programs will also help increase farmers opportunities to grow and sell organic produce, which will in turn help keep our water ways clean and decrease the amount of pesticides being used. This will help restore our land for future generations.

So I am writing you today to ask that you would fully support this program and help agriculture in Oregon to continue to thrive for generations to come.

The choices you make today will determine the future of agriculture in Oregon and I trust and believe you will do what is right.

Thank you for your time and consideration.