



March 28, 2023

To: House Committee on Economic Development and Small Business

Re: **Support HB 3449 -1 Amendment  
Regional Solutions Infrastructure**

Chair Bynum and Committee Members,

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), special districts governed by elected boards. The districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers working with our federal, state, and nonprofit partners.

We strongly support the -1 amendment to HB 3449 which would create a "funding readiness hub" to work in consultation with Oregon's Regional Solutions team to assist in bringing federal grant dollars down to Oregon programs.

The amendment proposes allocating \$300,000 to the Oregon Conservation Partnership (OrCP), of which OACD as an association is a member. The OrCP includes four associations: the Coalition of Oregon Land Trusts, the Network of Watershed Councils, the Oregon Association of Conservation Districts and the Oregon Conservation Education and Assistance Network. Our four entities work in coordination to support the 125 member entities--conservation districts, watershed councils and land trusts—to accomplish projects on the ground. The funding through HB 3449 would enable our members to be informed through the hub to be able to compete for grants from federal dollars coming to Oregon as a result of the state supplying a match for federal grant programs.

As special districts our 45 conservation districts are also affiliated with the Special Districts Association of Oregon and could receive information as well from SDAO regarding funding opportunities.

We encourage this committee to support the -1 amendment.

Sincerely,

Jan Lee, Executive Director  
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