

April 3, 2023

Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Hartman and Owens, and Members of the House Committee on
Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 3124, The BiDRAWS Resilience Package

Dear Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens, and Committee Members:

My name is Amanda Cross and I work for the Oregon Farmers Markets Association. I am grateful for the opportunity to write to you in support of HB 3124 and especially on the importance of component 4-7.

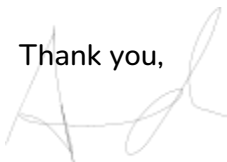
Component 4-7 provides support to small farms and food businesses that rely on farmers markets for their sales, and also protects Oregonians from losing the ability to use their SNAP benefits at farmers markets.

In regards specifically to food security and resilience, I wanted to share the importance this bill would have in increasing the potential for low income Oregonians to use SNAP at farmers markets to buy groceries. This funding solves the backend challenges that farmers markets have with running food assistance programs. Namely, accessing the needed technology and software that can handle mobile SNAP sales transactions, and the high level of administration and accounting these programs require. Small and rural markets that struggle with issues of too few staff, and experience more of the digital divide, would especially benefit from passage of this bill.

This program leverages the existing work OFMA has done as a one stop hub providing SNAP guidance for markets, which exists through no other agency in the state, and has grown the number of farmers markets accepting SNAP. In 2021, over \$1.6 million in SNAP benefits was spent at farmers markets, more than ever before. We must continue to make sure farmers markets are set up so that Oregonians with low income have easy access to fresh and locally grown food, which is a win for them and for our state's small farms and food makers.

Please support and advance HB 2134 with the important provisions in section 4-7.

Thank you,



Amanda Cross
Programs Manager
Oregon Farmers Markets Association