

Submitter: Thomas Rosewall
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: SB775

May 22nd, 2023

To: Senate Rules Committee
Re: SB 775 Soil and Water Conservation District Board Eligibility

Chair Lieber and Committee Members,

I would like to submit this letter of support for SB 775 as a resident living in the East Multnomah County Soil & Water Conservation District service territory.

The statute that limits eligible candidates for zoned seats to those who own or manage at least 10 acres does not realistically address the needs of Soil and Water districts with larger populations and significant urban considerations when making policy decisions regarding soil and water health.

This statutory update makes a lot of sense and is long overdue to bring the eligibility for candidates running for soil and water conservation district director positions in larger and more urbanized districts.

For those of us living in urban neighborhoods, it's unrealistic to believe that any of us will own or manage 10 acres of land.

I am a constituent in EMSWCD and don't own land and worry that with emerging issues in cities, these more populated districts need to have a more diverse set of perspectives than our rural neighbors – such as urban tree canopies, stormwater management, pesticide use in yards, native planting and drought tolerant plants to mitigate growing water shortages, heat islands, etc.

I live in EMSWCD and believe that all people should be able to run for these seats. It ensures that as a voter I have more choices and more opportunities for folx to run.

Thank you for your consideration,
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