

May 23, 2023

To: Senate Rules Committee

Re: SB 775 Soil and Water Conservation District Board Eligibility

Chair Lieber and Committee Members,

SB 775 seeks to update the eligibility rules for soil and water conservation districts so candidates for zoned seats in counties with populations of over 250,000 do not have to own or manage at least 10 acres of land. I am hopeful this important update is approved.

I live in Clackamas County and believe that all people should be able to run for these seats. I believe the 10-acre requirement limits my choice as a voter as well as my potential to serve in this capacity despite a longtime career with SWCDs in Oregon. As someone that deeply values the health of our environment, success of our working farms, equality, and diversity I am concerned about the barrier the current statute imposes on many that could enrich and strengthen SWCD boards.

I am hopeful that careful consideration will be given to this decision so that we can move forward with strong and diverse SWCD boards leading the important work of local land conservation moving forward.

Thank you for your time and consideration of my input.

Best Wishes,

*Mary LeGalbo*

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