



House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Oregon State Capitol
900 Court Street NE
Salem, Oregon 97301

February 5, 2024

Chair Helm, Vice-Chairs Hartman and Owens and members of the Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water:

I am writing, on behalf of Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network, in strong support of HB 4060, which would provide funding at \$10.8M for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP). This program has enjoyed significant bipartisan support, and its purpose is to protect farm and ranch land, keep it in production, and enhance its natural resource values.

We are especially interested in seeing the OAHP Conservation Management Plan Grants funded. These grants compensate landowners for implementing conservation practices including those that improve soil health. Soil health practices provide many benefits for farms and ranches, including:

- resilience to drought and other extreme weather events
- improved water and nutrient-holding capacity, reduced erosion, enhanced plant health
- economic resilience
- sequestered carbon, improved water quality, and increased biodiversity and habitat

The farmland protection provided by OAHP Working Land Easements also provides climate benefits. An acre of farmland produces 58-70 times fewer greenhouse gas emissions than an acre of urban land and provides opportunities for practices that sequester carbon. Protecting farmland while growing cities in a compact manner reduces 33 tons of GHG emission per acre per year when compared to sprawl development.

Please support and advance HB 4060.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Megan Kemple", is positioned above the typed name and title.

Megan Kemple
Executive Director
Oregon Climate and Agriculture Network (OrCAN)