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January 22, 2025

House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water
Committee

Oregon State Capitol
900 Court St., NE
Salem, OR 97301

**To: Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald,
and Members of the House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural
Resources, and Water Committee**

Re: Support HB 3131 and \$17.3 Million in Funding

Friends of Marion County is an independent 501(c)(3) farmland protection organization founded in 1998. Our mission is to protect farm and forestland, parks, and open space in Marion County.

We support the adoption of HB 3131 and \$17.3 Million in funding for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) in 2025-2027 Budget and urge the House Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water Committee to move this important measure to eventual passage by the 2025 Oregon Legislature.

We write to you today to share our strong support for HB 3131 and its \$17.3 million in funding the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP) in the 2025 Oregon Legislative Session. OAHP helps Oregon leverage a remarkable 2:1 federal match through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and protects working ranch and farmlands for their agriculture and natural resource values.

Allows farmers to realize some of the equity in their land without selling part of the farm or selling to developers.

Works with farmers on a voluntary basis to maintain and improve farm production while preserving ag land and conserving natural habitat.

Technical assistance helps farmers adapt to climate change and adopt climate-friendly practices.

January 22, 2025

Page | 2

Programs help farmers find the next generation to take over the land and keep it in production.

Has broad support across the industry and bipartisan support in the legislature.

The Climate Action Commission has repeatedly recommended funding for OAHP as an important part of Natural and Working Land climate mitigation.

Thank you for considering these comments.

Sincerely,

Roger Kaye, Pres.
Friends of Marion County
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