

Submitter: Heather Feinberg  
On Behalf Of: The Dalles Farmers Market  
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2979

Dear Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Wildfire,

My name is Heather Feinberg, and I am a Board Member for The Dalles Farmers Market. I am writing to strongly support HB 2979, and urge continued investment in Oregon's farmers markets, which serve as critical infrastructure for local economies, small farms, and food access programs.

Farmers markets are experiencing extreme weather. Heat waves, wildfires, droughts, and storms disrupt operations and threaten vendors. We need this funding to respond to these challenges and ensure markets remain open, accessible, and sustainable.

The Farmers Market Climate Resilience Grant Fund and SNAP support grants have been lifelines, helping markets upgrade infrastructure, implement cooling and smoke mitigation strategies, and expand SNAP/Double Up Food Bucks programs. But demand far exceeds available funding—grant requests would have required more than double the resources OFMA has to distribute. Without renewed investment, farmers markets will struggle to continue serving their communities.

These programs impact me personally because The Dalles is an economically struggling community and many of our shoppers depend on SNAP to access fresh products at the market. DUFB encourages shoppers to spend their SNAP funds at the market because it expands their spending power so much. Additionally, our farmers, ranchers, and other food producers really depend on those funds. DUFB isn't just an investment into food access - its an investment into our local economies as a whole. Instead of \$20 spent with our local farmers and producers, \$50 or \$60 is introduced int our community, per person. With inflation making things tighter for everyone, we need to be INCREASING access to locally grown healthy foods and keeping our dollars local, not dialing it back or removing it. That would be the OPPOSITE of helpful. Further, The Dalles experiences a lot of extreme weather events in the summer - heat index over 90F on many days, strong winds, and smoke events are becoming more and more common. We have many shoppers and vendors that opt out of vending and shopping due to heat sensitivity, their products not surviving in the heat, air quality, etc. Our market received OFMA funds this year to invest in improvements such as misters, and even to secure a back-up location for our market so that we don't have to close or end early in these cases. These

investments are absolutely crucial to maintaining and growing the market as a mainstay in our community and a major economic source during those months.

OFMA and FMF can leverage state funds to match federal funding, strengthening our farmers markets and local food systems. We cannot afford to fall behind. Please support HB 2979 to keep our markets strong, our farmers supported, and our communities fed.

Thank you,  
Heather Feinberg  
The Dalles Farmers Market  
The Dalles, OR