

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

My name is Mallory Watson, and I am community member living in Portland, OR. 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.

I have worked with Farmers Market Fund, the organization that administers Double Up Food Bucks in Oregon, for over 5 years. During my time, I have seen the positive impact that funding from the OFMA Climate Resilience Grants and FMF Growth Grants have had. These grants have allowed markets to expand their SNAP programs, increasing food access in the community and supporting our local farmers. Markets have also been able to build up crucial infrastructure that supports farmers and shoppers in the case of extreme weather events that are happening more and more frequently each winter and summer. This support is so important as we work to strengthen our local food systems.

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,

Mallory Watson

Farmers Market Fund

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