

Submitter: Debra Lutje
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 Debra Lutje, and I am the Secretary of the Board of Directors for The Dalles Farmers Market, previously a Sponsor and a long time shopper as part of the community of The Dalles. 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.

The Dalles Farmers Market has received an OFMA Climate Resilience Grant and it is a lifeline to our Market in the face of extreme weather conditions by allowing us to keep functioning despite excessive heat or smoke. TDFM also participates in SNAP and Double of Food Bucks programs that will be vital to our community.

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,

Debra Lutje

Secretary, The Dalles Farmers Market

The Dalles OREGON 97058