

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

My name is Bobbi Wilson, and I am a Farmers Market Manager from Roseburg. 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.

As we see frequent wildfires in Douglas County, our market has been impacted by excessive heat and poor air quality from wildfire smoke. Market closures and low market attendance are severely disruptive, particularly to small farmers who rely on the market to generate a steady income throughout the growing season. This funding will help markets remain open as much as possible so we can continue to provide an outlet for local businesses to sell their products.

Additionally, SNAP and Double-up Food Bucks bring a major economic boost to our market. In 2024, SNAP and Double-up Food Bucks sales accounted for just over 10% of sales to food and farm vendors. These programs greatly increase accessibility to fresh food for lower income households and go a long way in supporting our small farmers and local economy.

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,

Bobbi Wilson, Interim Market Manager
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