

Submitter: Georgie Pulman-Olzaski

On Behalf Of:

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 Georgie Pulman-Olzaski, and I am a farmers market vendor from Roseburg, Oregon. 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 any sort of closure from heat or smoke challenges my bottom line, which also affects the number of staff I need preparing our products for market and at the market, moreover my suppliers, the farmers, will also be affected by the reduction in my sales. Any farmers market closures will have a substantial effect on, not only mine, but other vendors' employment. If we lose our jobs, so do our employees.

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,
Georgie Pulman-Olzaski
Umpqua Valley Farmers Market
507 W. Elizabeth St., Roseburg, Oregon 97471