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

My name is Ann Pistacchi-Peck and I am a Farmers Market Manager from Bend, 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:

- Food insecurity in Central Oregon continues to rise year after year and our market sees an ever-increasing number of SNAP customers who are dependent on us to take EBT and to offer Double Up Food Bucks to help them access the healthy food they need to feed themselves and their families. FMF Growth Grants help us fund the equipment we need to continue to accept SNAP at the market, employ an EBT booth manager who can reliably be there to serve our SNAP clients, and employ a bilingual market support person to help our Spanish speaking customers and vendors shop and conduct business at the market.
- The effects of climate change mean our market faces closures due to heat/smoke, impacting our vendor's ability to remain economically viable and our community member's access to local food. OFMA Climate Resilience Grant funds are helping us purchase climate resilience equipment (shade structures, fans, masks, misters, etc) to help our vendors keep themselves safe and healthy during extreme smoke and weather

events and to produce bilingual education materials to help our vendors learn about ways to protect themselves and their products.

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,**

Ann Pistacchi-Peck  
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