

Submitter: Paul Buchanan

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 Water

My name is Paul Buchanan and I organize weekly group bike rides to the Portland State and King Farmers markets. I rely on farmers markets to put food on my table and feed my family. 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 that would have required more than double the resources OFMA has to distribute. Without renewed investment, farmers markets will struggle to continue serving their communities.

OFMA and FMF can leverage state funds to match federal funding, strengthening our farmers markets and essential local food systems. These local food systems are only getting more and more important as the breakout of the Bird Flu shows just how fragile the national corporatized food system is. We cannot afford to fall behind. Please support HB 2979 to keep our markets strong, our farmers supported, and our communities fed.

Thank you,
Paul Buchanan
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