

Submitter: Alissa Mayer

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 Alissa Mayer, and I am a community member from Oakridge-Westfir. 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 as a single-mom of twin boys. Not only are most of my sons friends and classmates in school receiving SNAP benefits, but one of my kids favorite weekend activities is to go to the market, get their food bucks, and shop with their friends for fresh fruits and veggies to snack on and often to bring home to 'contribute' to our family. They especially like to try new and interesting plants they have never seen before - I would not be able to afford to shop at our local market, nor to let my children choose and experiment with different produce each week, if not for these programs!

If not for the air filters on smoky days, I would not have been able to continue to attend and purchase local produce on numerous occasions over the last several summers.

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,

Alissa Mayer, Oakridge Resident
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Oakridge Community Farmers Market