

February 4, 2025

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

I am writing to strongly support HB 2979, and urge continued investment in Oregon's farmers' markets. These markets mean so much to our family and our SE Portland community, not only by providing access to high-quality produce, but also a gathering place for us to connect and thrive. I often think to myself, "I am so glad that I live in Portland where I can shop like this!"

In addition to my individual experience, I realize that these markets are critical for the survival of small farms and are a mainstay of our local economy. Portland's reputation of being a foodie town with great restaurants is surely connected to the strong linkages to the food network provided by these markets.

The Farmers Market Climate Resilience Grant Fund and SNAP support grants have been lifelines, helping markets upgrade infrastructure. *Without renewed investment, farmers markets will struggle to continue serving their communities.*

I am also a member of People's Food Coop and attend the farmers' market throughout the year. This market is small but mighty in its impact on our SE neighborhood, providing an invaluable connection to local produce and the opportunity to support local farms and farmers.

OFMA and Farmers Market Fund 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,
Alison Colman
Portland, OR