

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

My name is Alice Ma, and I am a People's Farmers' Market community member from Portland, OR. 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.

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:

- As a former AmeriCorps volunteer who relied heavily on SNAP benefits, I would not have been able to attend farmers markets and purchase from local farmers without the Double Up Food Bucks program.
- Having access to a variety of farmers markets within close distance throughout the year makes it easier for me to access fresh, local, and in season produce.
- I prioritize supporting my local economy and purchasing produce that has not traveled hundreds of miles to get to me.
- At a time where several large grocery chains have been exposed for poor employee treatment, I like meeting the people who grow food for our community and having confidence that their intentions and actions are altruistic.

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,

Alice Ma

People's Food Co-op

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