

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

My name is Tamara Lynne Wallace, and I am market manager of People's Farmers' Market in Portland. 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.

As a community member and as manager of People's Farmers' Market, I see the direct impact of programs funded by this bill every week at our market. People's has a very high percentage of customers who use SNAP funds as payment, and who benefit directly from the Double Up and Produce Match programs. These programs double the amount of fresh produce that low income households can purchase each market day. Our local farmers benefit significantly from these funds; customer purchases support small, local farms and farmers who work hard to provide healthy food. Local farms are essential to community food resilience, and we must prioritize keeping these farms in business. The Double Up program has been crucial for our community and for small, local farms, especially in uncertain and challenging economic times.

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,

Tamara (Lynne) Wallace
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