

Submitter: Ashley Hockersmith
On Behalf Of: Community member
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 Ashley Hockersmith, and I am a COMMUNITY MEMBER from 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.

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 because:

Farmer's markets are where I purchase a majority of my food. They create access to quality produce at an affordable cost, and allow me to directly connect with my local community, farmers, and growers. Farmer's markets are vital to the food systems and economy of my/our community.

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,
Ashley Hockersmith
Patron of Hollywood and Montavilla Farmer's Markets
2136 SE Ankeny st Apt 1, Portland Oregon 97214