

Submitter: Hank Keogh

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 Water:

My name is Hank Keogh and I am a Farmer from Corvallis. I am writing today to support HB 2979 and tell you how crucial it is that we continue our investment in the local food system by supporting small farms and ranches and the outlets that they depend on, especially farmers markets and food hubs. These community institutions not only bring economic opportunity into rural Oregon, they connect urban and rural areas through agricultural marketplaces, provide access to local food, and tap into nutrition assistance programs that spread these fresh Oregon grown fruits, vegetables, and meats to people who might not otherwise be able to get them. We need to make sure that these vital small businesses can withstand the natural disasters, worsening storms, and unpredictable weather that has been increasing in recent years.

In light of the recent tariff chaos generated by the current administration, imported food is going to get more expensive. We need to be sure our local food system is resilient and ready to supply Oregonians with healthy food at an affordable price.

I support HB 2979 to support investments in these crucial grant programs:

\$3.5M for OCFSN's Farmer and Rancher Disaster Resilience Grant Program.

\$2M for OCFSN's Food Hub Climate Resilience and Worker Safety Grant Fund.

\$2.5M for OFMA's Farmers Market Climate Resilience Grant Fund and grants to farmers markets to cover costs associated with acceptance of SNAP benefits.

Thank you,  
Hank Keogh