

Submitter: Kathryn Gourley  
On Behalf Of: la merenda farm  
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 Katie Gourley and I am a beginner organic farmer from Portland. 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. It is already so hard to choose, day after day to continue to farm in a political, environmental, and social landscape that makes this career challenging in every way (yes we have to choose it every single day!). As a young farmer staring climate change in the face, I know that this path forward will continue to get more challenging and uncertain. We need to make sure that our vital small businesses can withstand the natural disasters, worsening storms, and unpredictable weather that has been increasing in recent years. It is time for Oregon to renew its commitment to our small farms and local food system. We keep you fed and our lands stewarded. Please support HB 2979's investment in community food institutions that will allow my farm access to support and markets that I critically depend on. In the face of disasters related to climate, these institutions need a lifeline of support and this bill's funding will help show that Oregon believes in the importance of our local food system. Thank you  
Katie Gourley  
La Merenda Farm  
Portland, OR