

Dear Chair(s) and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2979, a critical bill that will provide much-needed funding and resources to small farmers as they confront the accelerating impacts of climate change. As a BIPOC women owner and operator of a small flower farm, an advocate for sustainable agriculture, and a concerned community member, I have witnessed firsthand the increasing challenges that climate change imposes on Oregon's agricultural landscape. Extreme weather patterns, prolonged droughts, unpredictable frost, and soil degradation threaten not only farm productivity but also the livelihoods of countless small and historically underserved farmers. HB 2979 is an essential step toward ensuring that Oregon's farmers have the necessary tools and financial support to implement climate-smart agricultural practices and build resilience in their operations.

Small farmers play an indispensable role in our food system, supplying local markets, strengthening food security, and stewarding land in ways that promote biodiversity and sustainability. However, they often lack the financial resources to invest in climate adaptation strategies, such as improving soil health, implementing water conservation methods, and transitioning to regenerative farming practices. Unlike large-scale agribusinesses, small farmers typically operate on tight margins, making access to funding a decisive factor in their ability to sustain their farms and contribute to climate solutions. HB 2979 will bridge this gap by providing equitable access to grants, technical assistance, and other essential resources that will allow small farms to remain viable and climate-resilient.

Investing in small farmers is an investment in Oregon's environmental and economic future. By supporting sustainable practices such as cover cropping, no-till farming, agroforestry, and renewable energy adoption, HB 2979 will help mitigate greenhouse gas emissions while promoting soil and water conservation. Moreover, this bill recognizes the importance of equitable access to funding, ensuring that historically underserved farmers—including BIPOC, women, and beginning farmers—have the financial support needed to thrive amid the growing climate crisis.

Without immediate action, climate change will continue to disproportionately impact small farmers, leading to increased land loss, food insecurity, and economic instability in rural communities. By passing HB 2979, Oregon has the opportunity to lead the way in supporting climate-resilient agriculture and ensuring that our local farmers can continue feeding our communities for generations to come.

I urge you to vote in favor of HB 2979 and stand with Oregon's small farmers in the fight against climate change. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Nikita Vincent
Twig & Bloom Flower Farm