

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

My name is Mary Kelly, and I am a People's Farmers' Market community member from Damascus, Oregon. I am writing to strongly support HB2979, 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.

I see first hand, as a long time People's Farmers' Market member, the amount of people using SNAP/DUFB and the farmers benefiting every week. People's Farmers' Market is a year around market and is open in all types of weather. We need to continue to support our local farmers, producing this amazing food and nourishing our communities.

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 HB2979 to keep our markets strong, our farmers supported, and our communities fed.

Thank you,

Mary Kelly
People's Farmers' Market
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