

Submitter: Beth Portesi

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2979

Hello Committee Members,

My name is Beth, and I am a small-scale organic farmer from Grants Pass, OR, in the Applegate Valley, operating Lazy Acres Farm. I am writing today to voice my strong support for HB 2979 and to share how the Oregon Disaster Resilience Program has played a vital role in funding critical projects that have strengthened our farm's ability to withstand the challenges posed by extreme weather and climate change.

As a farmer in Southern Oregon, our region frequently experiences drought conditions and the threat of wildfires. Access to reliable water sources is essential for sustaining our farm, yet unpredictable weather patterns have made it increasingly difficult to ensure consistent irrigation. Thanks to the Oregon Disaster Resilience Program, we received funding to install a comprehensive rainwater catchment system, which has significantly improved our water security and disaster preparedness.

This project included the installation of rainwater harvesting infrastructure on our existing buildings, providing us with a renewable and sustainable water source during dry spells. Additionally, we upgraded our irrigation system with solar-powered pumps, ensuring that we have access to water even during power outages, which are common during wildfire seasons. This investment has directly increased our farm's resilience by reducing dependence on traditional water sources and mitigating the risks associated with drought and extreme weather.

The ability to access funding for projects like these is crucial for small farms like ours. Without this support, the cost of implementing climate-adaptive infrastructure and improving water management would be prohibitive. Programs like HB 2979 ensure that Oregon's local food system remains strong, enabling farmers to continue providing nutritious, locally grown food to our communities, even in the face of extreme weather events and natural disasters.

I urge you to support HB 2979 and continue investing in the resilience of Oregon's farms, farmers markets, and food hubs. These initiatives are not just about agriculture—they are about food security, economic stability, and environmental stewardship. By funding critical projects that allow farms to adapt and thrive, you are helping to safeguard Oregon's agricultural future and strengthen our local food

systems for generations to come.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Beth