

JANEEN SOLLMAN
STATE SENATOR
DISTRICT 15



OREGON STATE SENATE

February 21, 2025

TO: Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health

RE: Support for SB 779

Chair Reynolds, Vice-Chair Anderson, and members of the Senate Committee on Early Childhood and Behavioral Health,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of Senate Bill 779, which continues to support the expenses of the AgriStress helpline, established by SB 955 in the 2023 session. This was a bicameral and bipartisan effort and provides a crisis hotline offering mental health services to farmers, farm workers, ranchers, fishermen, foresters, and their families.

Tragically, in the United States, suicide rates among farmers, ranchers, and other agricultural managers are almost 58% higher than any other occupation, and in Oregon, we have the 17th highest suicide rate in the US. Key factors contributing to these preventable deaths include financial losses, chronic illness, work-life imbalance, societal stigmas, and the physical and social barriers to access mental health services.

The creation of the AgriStress Helpline has greatly impacted and improved many Oregonians lives. This is a critical need that enables our rural communities to seek mental health services that meets them where they are, without the need to travel long distances to receive basic care. I urge your support for SB 779.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Janeen Sollman". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Janeen Sollman
Senate District 15