



February 21, 2025

Co-Chair Frederick, Co-Chair Levy and members of the Committee:

Re: HB 5040 – Lottery Funds for Grants - Support

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts, special districts governed by elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers as well as federal, state, and nonprofit partners.

We wish to convey to the Committee how essential the funding provided through the OWEB grants are to Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs) throughout Oregon. SWCDs apply for and receive funding in two distinct areas through these funds:

- project grants
- capacity grants

SWCDs, watershed councils, tribes, and non-profit organizations apply for a variety of project grants, both large and small, to do conservation and habitat restoration work in all areas of Oregon. Often, these projects are heavily matched with foundation, private, and/or federal dollars, bringing in more conservation funding to Oregon.

SWCDs are the boots on the ground for much of Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) Ag Water Quality work. This work is funded through capacity grants. This is important work because it gets many projects on the ground that implement Measure 76. The capacity grants fund project management and support enable the Districts to successfully implement project grants.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony and ask for your support for OWEB's use of lottery funds to provide local grants.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrea Kreiner", with a long, sweeping underline.

Andrea Kreiner, Executive Director
Oregon Association of Conservation Districts
Andrea.Kreiner@OACD.org