

Submitter: Leah Rodgers

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On
Natural Resources

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5039

2/25/2025

To: Ways and Means Subcommittee on Natural Resources

From: Leah Rodgers/ Indigo Gardens LLC

RE: H.B. 5039, Support for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program and OWEB
2025-2027 Budget

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board's (OWEB) 2025-2027 budget, especially the inclusion of funding for the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Program (OAHP).

I write to you today to share my strong support for \$17.3 million in funding OAHP in the 2025 Oregon Legislative Session. OAHP helps Oregon leverage a remarkable 2:1 federal match through programs including the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and protects working ranch and farmlands for their agriculture and natural resource values.

I am a first-generation farmer entering my twenty-first season as a specialty crop grower in western Oregon. I love it here. Our farmland and the soils that make our agriculture exceptional are worth the attention and support that OAHP will provide if given the proper funding. Some of the most important work that OAHP does includes:

Working with farmers on a voluntary basis to maintain and improve farm production while preserving ag land and conserving natural habitat, providing technical assistance to help farmers adapt to climate change and adopt climate-friendly practices, and I especially appreciate programs to help farmers find the next generation to take over the land and keep it in production.

Thank you,
Leah Rodgers

Owner/Operator