

Submitter: Brian Baker  
On Behalf Of: Belcain Concerns LLC  
Committee: Senate Committee On Natural Resources and  
Wildfire  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: SB887

Dear Chair Golden, Vice-Chair Nash and Members of the Committee:

My name is Brian Baker, Principal of the research and consulting firm Belcain Concerns LLC. I am writing in support of SB 887 to create an Organic Policy Specialist position at the Oregon Department of Agriculture (ODA).

The Oregon legislature declared organic to be one of five “emerging sectors” in Oregon and in 2022 appropriated funds for economic assessments of each sector. The assessment laid out several opportunities to build economic, agricultural, environmental, and community resilience through the organic sector. Oregon must continue to prioritize support for organic agriculture and there is a growing need for a policy specialist who understands the principles and practices of organic farming, production, and market creation.

This position would lead the facilitation, marketing, and trade of organic products, and ensure inner- & inter-agency integration of policies supporting organic practices.

I conduct research and consult for businesses and non-profit organizations. Having an Organic Policy Specialist in the Oregon Department of Agriculture would be a valuable asset to collect data and information about Oregon's vibrant and dynamic organic sector. Research across the U.S. shows that counties with high concentrations organic farms and related food businesses contribute more to the local economy than non-organic farms. Oregon has been a leader in having organic "hot spots" and needs to remain competitive.

An Organic Policy Specialist will help to see that the needs of all Oregon farmers are met by identifying potential policies that come in conflict with organic standards and principles. The position can also help facilitate the investment in necessary infrastructure and the marketing of organic crops to help Oregon's organic farmers thrive and prosper.

I urge you to vote in favor of SB 887.

Sincerely,  
Brian Baker, Ph.D.  
Belcain Concerns LLC