



March 21, 2025

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

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments in support of the Oregon Department of Agriculture's (ODA) agency budget. We want to stress the importance of ODA having adequate resources to provide their core services.

OACD represents the 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) statewide, which are special districts with elected boards. The Districts protect and enhance soil and water quality and habitat through voluntary conservation in partnership with rural and urban landowners and managers.

The Districts both provide technical assistance and are project implementers. They help farmers, ranchers, and other landowners translate their conservation goals into practices and projects. SWCDs work closely with ODA to implement agricultural water quality projects.

We support the \$650,000 for the Agricultural Water Quality Support Grants, which help SWCDs provide support for ODA Strategic Implementation Areas.

Given the number and potential impact of land use bills on agriculture this session, the importance of ODA's Land Use and Water Planning Coordinator position is evident. As shown in the Census of Agriculture, Oregon is losing agricultural land to a variety of development uses. The Department needs a knowledgeable staff to evaluate and advise on the impact of these proposals on Oregon's agricultural economy and future.

Finally, we want to express our support for and appreciation of ODA's Soil and Water Conservation District Program. The program staff and management work in partnership with the SWCDs, providing support and guidance, listening to any concerns and working to address them.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of ODA's budget.

Sincerely,

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

Andrea Kreiner, Executive Director  
Oregon Association of Conservation Districts

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