

Submitter: Mark Noah  
On Behalf Of: The Oregon State Grange  
Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water  
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3372

Co-Chairs Helm and Owens, Vice-Chair Finger McDonald and members of the committee: Due to a schedule conflict I was unable to present this testimony in person at Monday's hearing.

For the record, my name is Mark Noah and I am here in strong support of HB 3372 on behalf of the Oregon State Grange. The Oregon State Grange is a non-partisan, family friendly and agriculturally-oriented fraternal organization representing over 4800 members in 160 communities across Oregon. We support HB 3372 because we believe in the importance of promoting local community food systems, food security and rural resiliency. Delegates from community Granges across Oregon meet annually in June to consider questions of policy or legislation affecting our members. Last year our delegate convention approved a policy statement urging the State of Oregon to include agriculture, which since the 1950's has been the sole exclusion, as an allowed use of the commercial allotment every domestic well-owner is granted. We support HB 3372 for the following reasons:

Rural resiliency is a huge issue that the Legislature has been taking up and this bill would help  
promote rural resiliency and small-scale food production.

Farmers markets are points of connection especially in small rural towns, they create  
relationships between rural residents, building networks of people who can help each other  
in crisis, and feed each other in hard times.

Local control in local community resiliency and food security should be a priority of the  
Legislature, and is something that HB 3372 would help to promote.

Many of our Granges host farmers markets to help communities with self-sufficiency and we  
support legislation like HB 3372 that allows people to bring extra food to these markets, to help feed their neighbors and communities.

Domestic well users already have the right to water up to one-half acre of garden. HB 3372 does not change that limit, and in fact it actually would lower the allowable

amount of water used on that garden from 5,000 gallons per day to a maximum of 3,000 gallons per day. Farmers I have talked with have said that is nearly 10 times the amount of water they would apply to a one-half acre garden in a typical day during growing season.

Oregon State University Extension Service, in a paper titled 'Oregon agriculture by the numbers, part 2' reports: "In terms of acreage, small farms (less than 50 acres) account for just 2% of all farmland." The total acreage of all the one-half-acre plots subject to the change proposed by HB 3722 must be only a small fraction of that 2% figure. This change will not result in a significant impact on Oregon's overall water supply.

The Grange was founded in 1867 to provide support, education and a social framework for farm communities. Communities have changed but The Grange is still a community organization providing opportunities for social contact and supporting agriculture. We may not all be farmers anymore, but we all still have a healthy interest in agriculture and we offer our respect and support to those who grow our food.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify on behalf of The Oregon State Grange in support of HB 3372.