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April 22, 2025

**RE: SUPPORT of HB2979**

**Dear Joint Committee on Ways and Means,**

My name is Kyra Ramsay, and I am a Farmers Market Manager from unincorporated Aloha in Washington County Oregon. I am writing to strongly support **HB 2979**, and urge continued investment in Oregon's **farmers markets**, which serve as critical infrastructure for local economies, small farms, and food access programs.

**Farmers markets are experiencing extreme weather.** Heat waves, wildfires, wind events, droughts, and storms disrupt operations and threaten vendors. We need this funding to respond to these challenges and ensure markets remain open, accessible, and sustainable.

The **Farmers Market Climate Resilience Grant Fund** and **SNAP support grants** have been lifelines, helping markets upgrade infrastructure, implement cooling and smoke mitigation strategies, and expand SNAP/Double Up Food Bucks programs. But demand **far exceeds available funding**—grant requests would have required more than double the resources OFMA has to distribute. Without renewed investment, farmers markets will struggle to continue serving their communities.

These programs impact me personally because:

Our market has experienced closures in the past several years due to excessive heat, smoke from the wildfires and 35 mph+ wind gusts. Every market closure comes with a great monetary loss, from market operations, educational activities and loss of income for all of our vendors. This also affects folks that rely on getting fresh local produce at our market and utilizing the SNAP and DUFEB programs at our market.

We received an OFMA Climate Resilience Grant AND an FMF Growth Fund Grant that has helped our market tremendously. Aloha Community Farmers' Market is located in unincorporated Washington County. We do not have a local government that helps with funding our market. So these two grants were a lifeline and helped us out this past year by providing staff to distribute and record SNAP benefits, provide a SNAP TOUR for new folks to our market, new tents and misters for a shade & cooling station for patrons. It also allowed us to purchase more tent weights to be shared with our vendors.

All of these tools are great and we are beyond thankful! But, the need is SO MUCH MORE!

OFMA and FMF can leverage state funds to **match federal funding**, strengthening our farmers markets and local food systems. We cannot afford to fall behind. **Please support HB 2979 to keep our markets strong, our farmers supported, and our communities fed.**

**Thank you,**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyra Ramsay', with a large, stylized loop at the end.

**Kyra Ramsay, Market Manager**

Aloha Community Farmers' Market

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