

Submitter: Kyrsten Williams
On Behalf Of: Hollywood Farmers Market
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006
Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

As a local food systems leader, I'm here to urge you to support HB 2979, which provides funding for Oregon's farmers, ranchers, food hubs, and farmers markets.

Oregon's small farms and ranches, and the outlets where they market their products, are increasingly threatened by extreme weather events and wildfires. Supporting the Food Systems Resilience Programs in HB 2979 means investing in climate resilience, disaster preparedness, conservation and stewardship, rural economic development, and thriving small businesses all over our state. These investments benefit not just farmers and local food outlets but entire communities by fostering access to healthy, local food, creating hubs for community engagement and expanding nutrition incentive programs.

As someone who works with over 40 local farmers at the Hollywood Farmers Market I have seen firsthand how climate-related emergencies have negatively impacted the livelihoods of the folks growing our food. In addition to our farmers being affected our year-round, outdoor market is incredibly reliant on being climate resilient. This means having the ability to clear roads of snow or ice on a day's notice, keeping people cool in heat waves, weighing down tents during intense wind, and much more. As these weather events become more extreme, we have to increase the equipment and personnel to ensure our market can stay open to support local shoppers and businesses.

HB 2979 passed unanimously out of the House Committee on Ag, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water with over 200 submissions of written testimony in support, including a letter signed by 248 farms, food hubs, farmers markets, community organizations and others.

Continuity of this funding is critical! When funding is available one year and not the next, interest in these programs decreases, and it becomes difficult for farmers and community organizations to anticipate what will be available and take best advantage of it.

I urge you to fund HB 2979. Thank you!

Kyrsten Williams

