

Submitter: D Clark

On Behalf Of:

Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means,

As a small farm owner in Linn County for 40 years, I am writing to emphasize the critical importance of renewing the state's investment in climate-resilient agriculture through the passage of HB 2979, the Food Systems Resilience bill.

Our small farms and ranches, along with food hubs and farmers markets, are essential for building a resilient food system in Oregon, particularly in the face of changes and potential disruptions to centralized food networks. The economic impact of supporting these programs demonstrates a clear return on investment for our communities, rather than simply representing an expenditure. Viable farms, farmers markets, and food hubs are fundamental to a more secure and stable food supply for all Oregonians.

I strongly urge you to fund HB 2979, which provides vital resources for Oregon's Farmer and Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants, as well as similar support for Food Hubs and Farmers Markets. The broad support for this bill is evident in its unanimous passage out of the House Committee on Ag, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water, backed by over 200 submissions of written testimony, including a letter signed by 248 farms, food hubs, farmers markets, community organizations, and other stakeholders.

The Farmer & Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants are effectively empowering Oregon's small and underserved producers to proactively enhance their resilience to fire and extreme weather events. This funding supports crucial investments such as evacuation trailers, shade cloth, and irrigation efficiency. This proactive approach offers a strategic and responsible use of state funds, enabling farmers to safeguard their crops and livestock during disasters, thereby mitigating the need for reactive state compensation for losses.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this vital matter. I urge you to prioritize the funding of HB 2979 to ensure the continued resilience and vitality of Oregon's food system and our agricultural communities.

Sincerely,

D. Clark