

Testimony for HB 2979 In Support to the Ways and Means Committee on
4/27/2025 at 8 am from Flavia Franco of Southern Oregon Food Solutions of
Ashland, Oregon

Greetings,

Farmers and ranchers have experienced how climate change has impacted their capacity for food production. I want to add how it has impacted their market place when they go to sell what they've produced.

I have been volunteering at the Growers Market in Ashland since 2022, and I've seen market days ending early because of the heat and at least once because of the cold, and I've seen how when air quality is bad because of smoke, the shoppers just don't show up.

For these farmers, market days play a critical role in their economic success, and if they cannot sell their produce there, it can be donated, or if it's spoiled, then it cannot be of use to feed people. Either way, the farmers are taking a hit.

The funds from these grants meet a significant need. When funds were given in the past, the requests were double the amount of funds available. And these grants would help fill the gap left by interruptions from other governmental agencies.

Oregon needs to be prepared for supply chain interruption due to disaster or economic forces beyond our control. In Southern Oregon, the local farms need to be able to meet that demand.

This bill would benefit counties across Oregon, and would help underserved rural areas. This bill will help develop food hubs so small farms can share resources and deliver their products effectively.

Please make sure this proposed bill gets funded. It is an effective use of state funds.

Thanks.

Flavia Franco
Southern Oregon Food Solutions
Community Compost Coalition.