



April 29, 2025

To Senate Committee on Natural Resources and Wildfire

From: Oregon Association of Conservation Districts

Re: **Support HB 3372A, Exempt Uses of Water**

Chair Golden and Committee Members,

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), special districts governed by elected boards. The districts protect and improve soil health, water quality and quantity, and natural habitat by fostering voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers as well as federal, state, and nonprofit partners.

OACD supports HB 3372A which allows irrigating a commercial garden under an exemption for the need for a water right. This exemption is limited to ½ acre of land and no more than 3,000 gallons per day. We recognize that granting additional exempt uses is of concern as our state struggles with limited water supplies. We also recognize the importance of small-scale local food production and its role in food security.

Under current statute the exemption for irrigating a non-commercial garden is limited to ½ acre, but it does not have a cap on the amount of water that can be applied daily. HB 3372A allows for irrigation of a commercial garden but places a 3,000 gpd limit on irrigation of both commercial and non-commercial gardens. Thus, the bill is a good compromise; it allows a new important exemption, but at the same time takes action to prevent excessive use of water.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.

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