

Dear Ms. Patrino,

We own and operate a small family farm in Corbett, Oregon where we produce mixed vegetables for direct market sales throughout the Portland metropolitan area.

We are writing to show our full support for Aggie Bonds. The largest barrier to small farms and new farmers is a lack of accessible capital. Aggie Bonds HB 2700 would lower that barrier and allow more small farmers the chance to compete with large scale producers—those that receive the greatest portion of government subsidies.

Currently we lease land from our family and share a dwelling with them, drastically lowering our operational and living costs. This is the only reason we have been successful in our business and have not accrued overwhelming amounts of debt. That said, we are growing our business and looking to expand equipment and infrastructure to make our operation more efficient. We are currently seeking financing for a barn and it has been challenging to find low interest options. We have very few assets and banks do not want to give loans for anything besides cars and homes. If we took out a personal loan, it would be prohibitively high interest rates. We were told by the FSA that we would not qualify for their loan program because we don't currently own our land and even if we did qualify, they have a very long waiting list of folks trying to get loans. If my family decided to borrow from their house to help us finance a loan, they would have to lie and say that there is no income producing farm operation on the property. Many of our fellow farmer friends have been put in this uncomfortable situation. We shouldn't be hiding our farming practices as if they were shameful, we should be embracing them as they are the future.

We need loan reform for small farmers. Please support Aggie Bonds HB 2700.

Thank you,

Katie Coppoletta and Rowan Steele