Food Innovation Center
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Dear Chairman Lively, Vice-Chair Fahey, Vice-Chair Bonham and Members of the Committee:

This letter serves as enthusiastic support of the James Beard Public Market. I am the Director of the Oregon State University Food Innovation Center (FIC) and serve on the James Beard Public Market Advisory Council.

The FIC is an Agricultural Experiment Station focused on advancing food and beverage across the Northwest, as well as a joint venture between OSU and the Oregon Department of Agriculture. We've worked with thousands of entrepreneurs and companies across Oregon over the past nineteen years, supporting their growth and success in value-adding Oregon agriculture and launching their products into new markets. Our services are focused on food safety, product and process development and sensory evaluation. We also have a mission to serve under-represented and diverse audiences, in both urban and rural Oregon.

The goals of the James Beard Public Market's align well with the mission of the FIC. Once built, this asset will help promote local foods and products from diverse sectors across Oregon. From my discussion with many stakeholders, we see high potential for economic development, education and outreach, and opportunities for vendors to showcase their products in the Market. We recognize that this effort will require support from both public and private sectors. Therefore, the successful passage of HB 2810 to appropriate $400,000 to offset the cost of the $1.2 million in pre-development expenses, would be critical to advance this process.

The FIC is excited to partner with the James Beard Public Market and further Oregon's economic vitality. Given our State's international acclaim for agriculture, restaurants, chefs and model farms, the timing for this Market is now.

Sincerely,

Dave Stone, Ph.D.
Director, OSU Food Innovation Center
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