



Curry County Soil and Water Conservation District

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April 19, 2021

Attention: Natural Resources Subcommittee, Joint Ways and Means Committee

From: Curry County Soil and Water Conservation District (Curry SWCD)

RE: SB 5502, Oregon Department of Agriculture Budget

Co-Chairs Representative Reardon and Senator Taylor and Committee Members:

SWCDs are local governments with countywide elected boards. Curry SWCD serves Curry County, protecting natural resources through providing technical assistance for conservation on both rural and urban lands. District staff members work with landowners to provide technical expertise on project development and assist with securing additional funding from state, federal and non-profit partners.

SWCDs throughout the state are statutorily linked with ODA and depend upon the agency for technical support with developing programs and providing support to landowners. Over the last several years, ODA staff positions have continued to be cut in the SWCD division and yet districts are providing ever more extensive services at the local level in carrying out the work of the agency's Natural Resources division.

Our request is to fill the management position that was deleted in Package 090 of the department's budget. By not filling that position, the current water quality manager is expected to manage both the extensive water quality work as well as the many other programs in which districts are involved. The water quality program has also been cut from its former ability to provide support by removing two water quality specialists.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our concerns.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Liesl Coleman".

Liesl Coleman
District Manager