

HOUSE AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 2998

By COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, LAND USE, NATURAL RESOURCES, AND
WATER

March 23

1 On page 1 of the printed bill, line 2, delete “creating new provisions; amending ORS 352.808;”.

2 Delete lines 4 through 18.

3 Delete lines 20 through 28 and delete pages 2 through 7 and insert:

4 **“SECTION 1. (1) As used in this section and section 2 of this 2023 Act:**

5 **“(a) ‘Soil and water conservation district’ means a political subdivision of this state de-**
6 **scribed in ORS 568.550.**

7 **“(b) ‘Soil health’ means the overall composition of soil, including soil structure, the water**
8 **and nutrient holding capacity of the soil, the amount of organic matter in the soil and the**
9 **continued capacity of the soil to function as a biological system.**

10 **“(c) ‘Soil health practice’ means an agricultural practice that is scientifically supported**
11 **to improve soil health over time or is broadly consistent with any of the soil health principles**
12 **of the Natural Resources Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agricul-**
13 **ture.**

14 **“(2) There is created the Oregon Soil Health Initiative. The purpose of the initiative is**
15 **to promote soil health in this state by advancing voluntary and incentive-based soil health**
16 **strategies through activities that include, but are not limited to, providing technical assist-**
17 **ance, outreach, education, financial incentives or other resources and supporting research.**

18 **“SECTION 2. To achieve the purpose described in section 1 (2) of this 2023 Act, as far**
19 **as is practicable and subject to available funds:**

20 **“(1) The Oregon State University Extension Service and any soil and water conservation**
21 **districts that voluntarily participate in the Oregon Soil Health Initiative shall:**

22 **“(a) Provide technical assistance to agricultural producers to increase voluntary adoption**
23 **of soil health practices.**

24 **“(b) Promote soil health practices to Oregon’s agricultural communities by:**

25 **“(A) Conducting outreach and education, including trainings for agricultural producers**
26 **to promote soil health across this state’s diverse regions and production types;**

27 **“(B) Promoting farmer-to-farmer learning;**

28 **“(C) Collaborating with local partners and agricultural producers to conduct soil health**
29 **demonstration projects to showcase soil health research and practices and build statewide**
30 **awareness and understanding;**

31 **“(D) Highlighting existing soil health improvement efforts by Oregon farmers and**
32 **ranchers; and**

33 **“(E) Supporting agricultural producers in the identification of those producers’ soil**
34 **health goals and in efforts to monitor success in reaching those goals.**

35 **“(c) Ensure that technical assistance, outreach and education described in this sub-**

1 section are accessible on an equitable and culturally appropriate basis to agricultural pro-
2 ducers across Oregon’s diverse agricultural communities and geographies including, but not
3 limited to, veteran farmers or ranchers, beginning farmers or ranchers or socially disad-
4 vantaged farmers or ranchers, as those terms are defined in 7 U.S.C. 2279, and farmers or
5 ranchers who are women.

6 “(2) The Oregon State University Extension Service shall provide extension specialist
7 capacity to promote soil health, with a focus on cropping systems or on geographic regions
8 of this state where additional support and capacity are needed.

9 “(3) The College of Agricultural Sciences of Oregon State University shall train technical
10 service providers in soil sample collection and provide free or low-cost soil health testing to
11 voluntary participants.

12 “(4) The Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board shall:

13 “(a) Provide grants under ORS 541.984 for the voluntary implementation of soil health
14 practices, including the continuation or expansion of existing soil health practices and the
15 transition to new soil health practices.

16 “(b) Provide grants to soil and water conservation districts and other technical assist-
17 ance providers to increase their capacity to provide technical assistance and equipment to
18 agricultural producers to improve soil health.

19 “SECTION 3. The State Department of Agriculture shall establish, hire and employ one
20 full-time equivalent position of soil health specialist. The soil health specialist shall coordi-
21 nate with and support the efforts of the Oregon State University Extension Service, the
22 College of Agricultural Sciences of Oregon State University, the Oregon Watershed En-
23 hancement Board, soil and water conservation districts, federal agencies, tribal govern-
24 ments, nongovernmental organizations and any other organization to support the purpose
25 of the Oregon Soil Health Initiative described in section 1 (2) of this 2023 Act.

26 “SECTION 4. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appro-
27 priated to the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, for the biennium beginning July 1,
28 2023, out of the General Fund, for deposit in the Oregon Agricultural Heritage Fund estab-
29 lished under ORS 541.978, the following amounts for the following purposes:

30 “(1) \$500,000 for the purpose of providing grants under section 2 (4)(a) of this 2023 Act;
31 and

32 “(2) \$480,000 for the purpose of providing grants under section 2 (4)(b) of this 2023 Act.

33 “SECTION 5. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appro-
34 priated to the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, for the biennium beginning July
35 1, 2023, out of the General Fund, the following amounts for the following purposes:

36 “(1) \$225,000 for distribution to the College of Agricultural Sciences of Oregon State
37 University for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of section 2 (3) of this 2023 Act.

38 “(2) \$480,000 for distribution to Oregon State University Extension Service for the pur-
39 pose of carrying out the provisions of section 2 (2) of this 2023 Act.

40 “SECTION 6. In addition to and not in lieu of any other appropriation, there is appro-
41 priated to the State Department of Agriculture, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, out
42 of the General Fund, the amount of \$272,234, which may be expended for the purpose of
43 carrying out section 3 of this 2023 Act.

44 “SECTION 7. This 2023 Act takes effect on the 91st day after the date on which the 2023
45 regular session of the Eighty-second Legislative Assembly adjourns sine die.”

