



Oregon Beef Council
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January 24, 2023

Dear Chair Helm and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Oregon Beef Council, I am writing to add my support for HB 2907.

Oregon Beef Council board members come from every corner of the state and the board includes three cow/calf producers, two dairy representatives, a cattle handler, a cattle feeder, and one public member. The Oregon Beef Council funds research at Oregon State University, advertising and promotion programs to improve beef demand, works on export market development, and conducts other programs to benefit producers.

The State Meat Inspection Program that passed in 2020 was a great step in the right direction for the future of Oregon beef. I attended many of the follow-up meetings with producers and the Oregon Department of Agriculture since then, and there are many innovative local beef producers and processors who have been thrilled to work with the Oregon Department of Agriculture to bring this all together.

In 2021, the legislature took another step forward by passing HB 2785, which after negotiations, allocated \$2 million in funding to significantly boost Oregon infrastructure, and provide partnerships for Oregon producers to market local beef.

The processing capacity limitations that we saw in 2020 resulted in empty shelves and limited places for local farmers and ranchers to sell cattle that were ready for market. These cattle, when ready to market, cannot wait and sometimes must leave the state for processing. This investment on the part of the Oregon Legislature was certainly felt and appreciated by producers. However, the eligible fund applications totaling more than \$14 million far exceeded available program funds. This high-level of interest on the part of Oregon beef industry entities after the rollout of HB 2785 speaks volumes as to the current need.

I urge you to support HB 2907, which will allocate an additional \$10 million in funding to the meat inspection grant program to help our local producers come into compliance with the State Meat Inspection Program and ultimately, bring healthy, locally produced and processed food produced by Oregonians to Oregonians' tables.

Thank you for taking the time to read these comments.

Sincerely,

William N. Wise
Chief Executive Officer
Oregon Beef Council