




OREGON WHEAT GROWERS LEAGUE115 SE 8th Street  Pendleton, OR 97801  541.276.7330  www.owgl.org

Date: February 9, 2023

To: Chair Nathanson and Members of the house Committee on Revenue
From: Oregon Wheat Growers League
Re: Support HB 2624

Chair Nathanson and Members of the Committee,

The Oregon Wheat Growers League is a nonprofit trade association representing the nearly 2,000 farms across Oregon producing wheat. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2624.

Allowing for an additional estate tax exclusion of \$1 million and including a yearly cost-of-living adjustment will make a meaningful impact to family wheat farmer operations who continue to face the challenge of how to keep a farm together following the death of a family member.

As wheat farmers, most of our investment is to the land and equipment necessary to produce a crop. Our business is in the soil—it is a unique aspect of agriculture. And, over time, the valuation of that land has continued to escalate, particularly as we face pressures from development and corporate interests.

In the event of a death, especially a sudden one, family farms are faced with a challenging prospect as they typically have low-cash assets. These families are often forced to divide and sell a portion of the farm in order to cover estate taxes. It ends up driving out family farms and increasing non-farm and corporate operations.

Combined with the dividing up of farms, we also see an impact to the stewardship of resources. Our producers are forced to make choices not just in dividing up a farm but also how they manage the remaining farm in the immediate term. Our members have shared experiences of both selling a portion of their land and logging a parcel to generate the necessary cash. Of greatest concern, though, is the necessity for selling property as the dividing of that land has a cascading effect, impacting the viability of the remaining farm to continue operations.

As we see an upcoming generational shift, it becomes ever more challenging to maintain Oregon as a state in which young farmers can operate. This change will support rural agricultural communities and provide options for the next generation to continue farming. We appreciate your consideration of House Bill 2624 and the positive impact it would have to the preservation of family farm operations.

Thank you,



Amanda Hoey, CEO
Oregon Wheat Growers League

