

Submitter: Dan Warnock

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and  
Water

Measure: HB2998

Chair Helm and members of the Committee, for the record my name is Dan Warnock, rancher in Imnaha Oregon and a Board member of the Wallowa Soil & Water Conservation District.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of HB 2998, which establishes the Oregon Soil Health Initiative to leverage existing programs and expand resources to support farmers and ranchers with soil health practices that make the most sense for their land and businesses.

Agriculture drives Wallowa County's culture, economy, and land conditions. There have already been numerous farmers, myself included, that have planted cover crops to improve their soils. Dryland cropland is one area in Wallowa County that could use help, both technical and monetary, to begin planting cover crops. In the long run, improving the soil health provides soil with more nutrients and water holding capacity.

This bill would help landowners to implement soil health principles and practices to and help the Soil & Water Conservation Districts to:

1. Provide training and education for agricultural producers to promote soil health across this state's diverse regions and production types;
2. Collaborate with local partners and landowners to promote soil health demonstration projects to showcase practices and build statewide awareness and understanding; and
3. Highlight existing soil health improvement efforts by Oregon farmers and ranchers.

The Healthy Soils Bill would give us the capacity to do this work to support farmers and ranchers in our county.

Thank you for your support of HB 2998.