

# OMGA<sup>TM</sup>

## Oregon Master Gardener Association

To: Senate Education Committee  
Senator Michael Dembrow, Chair  
Senator Suzanne Weber, Vice-Chair  
Senator Dick Anderson  
Senator Lew Frederick  
Senator Sara Gelser Blouin  
Senator Art Robinson  
Senator Rob Wagner

Re: **Support SB 458 Oregon Statewide Public Service Programs**

We are Oregon State University Master Gardeners™ who serve as ambassadors for the Oregon Master Gardener Association (OMGA), an organization that represents Master Gardeners across Oregon. On behalf of 2,800 members, we ask for your support of the **OSU Statewide Public Service Programs funding (SB 458)**.

Master Gardeners give time, efforts, and money to serve home gardeners through the OSU Extension Master Gardener™ Program. We are the front-line workers in the home horticulture arena. We see first-hand the strong desire for home-grown, quality food. We know intimately the urgent need for information about gardening during a time of rapidly changing climate.

That's why we are pleased to see the proposed **new initiatives in SB 458 to address increasing resiliency of our food system, communities, and the natural resources**.

Each year, Extension Master Gardeners teach thousands of local gardeners how to grow their own food and how to garden using practices that build soil, conserve water, and help wildlife. During 2022, Oregon Master Gardeners provided 108,530 hours of service and served 78,713 clients.

Master Gardeners need a strong OSU Extension Service to be the foundation for our service. To ensure we provide the best advice and education to Oregonians, we received 15,175 hours of continuing education training from OSU Extension in 2022. OSU Extension Service engages people, families, and businesses to help solve problems, manage resources, and develop leadership in rural and urban areas. Please invest in OSU Extension Service – this investment provides immediate benefit for both rural and urban Oregonians.

In summary, please support expanding opportunities for Oregonians by fully funding SB 458 OSU Statewide Public Service Programs -- a total of **\$206 M which includes the \$50 million package** to provide full Continuing Service Level funding and new initiatives to build resiliency in Oregon communities, food system, and natural resources.

2/28/2023

Sincerely,

*Y. Sherry Sheng*

Sherry Sheng, OMGA Advocacy Task Force Chair

OMGA Advocacy Task Force Members

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