



March 31, 2023

To: House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources & Water

Re: **Support for HB 3124**

Chair Helm and Committee Members,

The Oregon Association of Conservation Districts (OACD) represents Oregon's 45 Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCDs), special districts governed by elected boards. The districts protect and enhance soil quality, water quality and quantity, and habitat by supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers working with our federal, state, and nonprofit partners.

We appreciate the compilation of necessary water-related work that is listed in the presentation document of HB 3124 contents. We strongly support this needed work and the value it will bring to many statewide.

HB 2998 is a part of the HB 3124 components, and we urge that whatever results from HB 3124 includes the contents of HB 2998 which promotes soil health.

SWCDs have the knowledge, skills, and abilities to help implement HB 2998 by providing technical assistance to farmers and ranchers, enabling them to use scientifically based tools to build and restore soils. SWCDs also assist farmers and ranchers in securing grants from state and federal agencies. We are not regulatory--our role is to provide services and support to get projects implemented on the ground.

We look forward to working with the other partners we already have strong relationships with as identified in this bill: OWEB, ODA, and OSU Extension. Our districts are generally co-located with NRCS personnel, and we can assist in getting those programs implemented on the ground as well.

Sincerely,

Jan Lee, Executive Director
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