

Submitter: Megan Trombetta
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Senate Committee On Rules
Measure: SB775

May 19, 2023

To: Senate Rules Committee

Re: SB 775 Soil and Water Conservation District Board Eligibility

To Chair Lieber and Committee Members,

I would like to submit this letter of enthusiastic support for SB 775. Thank you to you and the Rules Committee for hearing on this outdated, exclusionary, and racist restriction.

SB 775 seeks to update the eligibility rules for soil and water conservation districts so candidates for zoned seats in districts with populations of over 250,000 do not have to own or manage at least 10 acres of land. We believe this is a long overdue update to the current statute.

For those of us living in urban neighborhoods (and with the growing price of property in general), it's unrealistic to believe that any of us will own or manage 10 acres of land. I am a constituent in District 5 and don't own land and worry that with emerging issues in cities, these more populated districts need to have a more diverse set of perspectives than our rural neighbors – such as urban tree canopies, stormwater management, pesticide use in yards, native planting and drought tolerant plants to mitigate growing water shortages, heat islands, etc. The statute as it stands eliminates qualified candidates from running for zoned seats run for a seat in a counties where we live and pay taxes for the Soil and Water district. This is more than outdated. It is deeply problematic as it unfairly prevents input from critical voices and perspectives, keeps decision making power in the hands of only wealthy families and prevents the flexibility and creativity that is needed to develop our city in an ecologically responsible way. I believe that all people should be able to run for these seats. It ensures that as a voter I have more choices and better representation in these critical issues.

Thank you for your support of this important move toward more equitable resource governance!!

Respectfully,
Megan Trombetta
9821 SW Quail Post Rd Portland OR 97219
megan.trombetta@gmail.com

9713280033