

May 22, 2023

To: Senate Rules Committee

Re: SB 775 Soil and Water Conservation District Board Eligibility

Chair Lieber and Committee Members,

I would like to submit this letter of support for SB 775.

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

The statute that limits eligible candidates for zoned seats to those who own or manage at least 10 acres does not realistically address the needs of Soil and Water districts with larger populations and significant urban considerations when making policy decisions regarding soil and water health.

This statutory update makes a lot of sense and is long overdue to bring the eligibility for candidates running for soil and water conservation district director positions in larger and more urbanized districts.

I am a taxpayer in Clackamas County and find it troubling that I and others in my county owning fewer than 10 acres can't run for a seat on the Clackamas SWCD. Let's update this outdated statute and allow for open elections and hope that the most qualified candidate for that zone wins.

Thank you for your consideration,

Glen Leverich

Resident of Lake Oswego, Clackamas County, OR