



February 2, 2024

To House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water

From: Oregon Association of Conservation Districts

Re: **HB 4060 – Oregon Agriculture Heritage Fund**

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 providing technical services and supporting voluntary conservation in partnership with private landowners and managers as well as federal, state, and nonprofit partners.

OACD strongly supports HB 4060 for the funding of conservation easements on working lands as well as conservation management plans and succession planning programs that are also funded from the OAHP program. Our member conservation districts are authorized by statute to hold conservation easements and several of our members actively support easement programs.

Agriculture practices that support carbon sequestration work can also be funded through this program as part of conservation management programs. This part of the OAHP fund is an important tool to move forward with further conservation on our working lands.

We urge your support for funding OAHP for it to remain a strong program to assist in protecting our working lands from development while affording more conservation opportunities.

Sincerely,

Andrea Kreiner

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