

Submitter: Janet Wallinder

On Behalf  
Of:

Committee: House Committee On Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and  
Water

Measure: HB4060

Dear Chair Helm, Vice Chairs Owens and Hartman, and members of the committee: Our names are Jan Wallinder and Ron Webb. We are farmers and foresters in the Beavercreek area of Clackamas County. We have 45 acres of multiple use, including managing timber, orchard and vineyard. We are writing today in support of the Oregon Agricultural Heritage program and HB 4060. OAHF is the beginning of an investment that the state needs to make if it is truly going to support Oregon's community food systems and agricultural future. The conservation management plan and conservation easement portions of the program are great examples of supporting the farmer driven desire to protect the ecosystems of our working lands in harmony with food production. We should make these tools available to as many farmers as possible.

We have worked with Oregon Agricultural Trust and Clackamas Soil and Water Conservation District to put a conservation easement on our property. Our goal was to ensure the property would continue as a working farm and forest for succeeding generations. The easement allows us to protect the property from development and keep farmland affordable for the next generation of farmers.

We were fortunate to have family financial resources to support putting an easement on the property. Many farmers do not have those resources and we risk losing land to future farming if we cannot support current and future farmers to protect their land. Conservation easements are one of the only widely used tools we are aware of that can permanently lower the cost of accessing farmland. Conservation management plans allow farmers and land stewards to enact the needed restoration and maintenance projects to keep the farm ecosystem functioning and keep our agricultural land viable for generations to come. We are so lucky to have a vibrant community food system here in Oregon and we need to invest in it to keep it viable. Thank you to the committee members and chair who have prioritized this bill and the Oregon Ag Heritage Program. We urge you to support this vital program for the sake of Oregon's communities, land and agricultural future.

Janet Wallinder & Ron Webb