

**Dear Co-Chair Helm, Co-Chair Owens, and Members of the House Committee on Agriculture, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water,**

My name is Liz, and I am a People's Farmers' Market community member from Portland. I am writing to strongly support **HB 2979**, and urge continued investment in Oregon's **farmers markets**, which serve as critical infrastructure for local economies, small farms, and food access programs.

The **Farmers Market Climate Resilience Grant Fund** and **SNAP support grants** have been lifelines, helping markets upgrade infrastructure, implement cooling and smoke mitigation strategies, and expand SNAP/Double Up Food Bucks programs. But demand **far exceeds available funding**—grant requests would have required more than double the resources OFMA has to distribute. Without renewed investment, farmers markets will struggle to continue serving their communities.

These programs impact me personally because I am a SNAP beneficiary, and use the Double-Up program as the primary source of the produce I eat. This program enables me to access fresh, local produce and support local farmers while extending my monthly benefits. I am a student at a health university and frequently encourage patients who have SNAP to consider this program as a way to make high-quality food more financially accessible. In a time of increasing food prices, SNAP/DUFB gives those with less financial resources greater access to healthier food options while simultaneously feeding federal funding back into our local economy. I cannot overstate how incredibly important supporting HB 2979 is to me- I rely heavily on the Double-Up program at People's Co-op as part of my grocery budget and believe it is a crucial step in furthering food equality amongst all members of our community while simultaneously supporting local farmers, directly decreasing reliance on importing food from other areas of the country and globe. As a future healthcare practitioner, I also believe that this program is a positive step in encouraging and creating access to quality fresh produce and a nutritious diet, a key component of health and well-being.

OFMA and Farmers Market Fund can leverage state funds to **match federal funding**, strengthening our farmers markets and local food systems. We cannot afford to fall behind. **Please support HB 2979 to keep our markets strong, our farmers supported, and our communities fed.**

**Thank you,**  
Liz Bergum

PEOPLE'S FARMERS' MARKET

3029 SE 21st Ave, Portland OR, 97202