

Submitter: Elee Jen
On Behalf Of:
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006
Members of the Committee:

My name is Elee Jen, with Great Harvest Hydroponic Produce.

I am here to urge your support of HB 2979, which provides funding for Oregon's Farmer and Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants as well as similar funding for Food Hubs and Farmers Markets.

The Farmer & Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants are supporting Oregon's small and underserved producers to be more resilient to fire and extreme weather events – funding things like shade cloth, cooling wall, rain water collection, emergency generator, and trailers for evacuation, and irrigation efficiency. This funding is a great alternative to traditional disaster relief funding, as it has given farmers the resources to maintain their crops and livestock through disasters, rather than being compensated by the State after they lose them. This is a strategic and responsible use of state funding.

I am a recipient of the Farmer and Rancher Disaster Resilience Grants. Even though it was a partial approval of the amount that was applied for, but it covered the cost of purchasing a 5050 gallon of rain water collection tank, the connection pipes and small labor fee. This helps us to have stored rainwater to use during the summer drought season. We also let our neighbors and community know here is the resource to share with them if they are in need of water.

HB 2979 passed unanimously out of the House Committee on Ag, Land Use, Natural Resources, and Water with over 200 submissions of written testimony in support, including a letter signed by 248 farms, food hubs, farmers markets, community organizations and others.

Continuity of this funding is critical! This biennium, \$7 million dollars were requested for the Disaster Resilience grants with only \$2.5 million available. As you can see, the need far exceeds available funding.

Please fund HB 2979. Thank you.