

Submitter: Bill Royle

On Behalf Of:

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

Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3372

Our family owns over 100 acres of EFU-zoned land in rural Oregon, and while the property is beautiful, its use is limited because we don't have water rights. The cost of obtaining those rights is far beyond our means, but if we were allowed to cultivate just half an acre of vegetables without needing them, it would make a big difference for us and other rural families. Growing vegetables locally would reduce our reliance on out-of-state grocery chains that have no connection to Oregon farmers or communities. It would also give us more flexibility in what we can grow, keeping our dollars within the state and supporting local agriculture instead of distant supply chains.

This bill would also help reduce unnecessary travel for fresh produce, which can be a challenge for rural residents. Many of us live far from grocery stores, and being able to grow food on EFU land would cut down on fuel costs and make healthy eating more accessible. There's been a growing push for people to buy local and rely less on long-distance transit for goods, and this bill supports that idea by giving rural Oregonians the chance to grow their own food. Oregon has a history of collective gardens and small-scale farming, and HB3372 would allow families like ours to continue that tradition while making better use of the land we already have. We urge you to support this bill as a practical way to strengthen rural communities and improve food access across the state.

Thank you for your time.