

Submitter: Lucinda Klicker
On Behalf Of: South Waterfront Farmers Market
Committee: Joint Committee On Ways and Means
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB5006

Members of the Joint Committee on Ways and Means:

I am here to urge your support of HB 2979, which provides funding for Oregon's farmers, ranchers, food hubs, and farmers markets.

Oregon's small farms and ranches, and the outlets where they market their products, are increasingly threatened by extreme weather events and wildfires. Supporting the Food Systems Resilience Programs in HB 2979 means investing in climate resilience, disaster preparedness, conservation and stewardship, rural economic development, and thriving small businesses all over our state. These investments benefit not just farmers and local food outlets but entire communities by fostering access to healthy, local food, creating hubs for community engagement and expanding nutrition incentive programs.

The South Waterfront Farmers Market serves small businesses and local farmers by providing them with opportunities for business growth and connection within a community who would not otherwise have grocery options available. Our South Waterfront community is strengthened by the farmers market and our commitment to ensuring the safety and shop-ability of the market through climate resiliency Grants. In recent years our market has been hit especially hard by extreme weather events that have shut down the market or drastically reduced the profitability of our vendors. Grant opportunities for climate resiliency fill critical gaps in our markets limited funding and goes directly back into strengthening our immediate community, and local economy of vendors.

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! When funding is available one year and not the next, interest in these programs decreases, and it becomes difficult for farmers and community organizations to anticipate what will be available and take best advantage of it.

I urge you to fund HB 2979. Thank you.